

GSP 10.2.

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Global Social Policies: Redistribution, Regulation and Rights

REDISTRIBUTION

The international debate about whether to introduce some kind of “Robin Hood” Tobin Tax to ensure that the Banks and finance transactions pay for the debts of rich countries, contribute to the costs incurred by poor countries adapting to climate change, pay for realising the MDGs and compensate for the reduce flow of ODA continued. The [OECD DACnews](#) argues that “international tax policy is also development policy”¹ and ”bringing the tax and development policy areas together in an [OECD tax and development programme](#) could be an important contribution to raising tax revenues in developing countries”.² In this context the OECD tax and development experts decided to set up an [Informal Task Force](#) on Tax and Development³. The IMF had also been tasked by the G20 meeting in September 2009 to [report](#) on the [feasibility](#) of a Tobin style tax by March 2010⁴ (GSP 10.1). Its [report](#)⁵ as discussed [here](#) by the head of the IMF’s fiscal affairs department was more radical than expected and suggested two taxes on banks; first a financial stability contribution to guard against future insolvency, and second a financial activities tax (FAT) equivalent to VAT on based on profits and pay structures⁶. International agreement and common action was essential. Up to 4% of GDP could be raised this way for government revenues. This recommendation will now go to the G20 meeting in June in Canada. [Finance ministers of the G7](#) who met in Canada in February also had the tax on their agenda⁷. Advocacy for the Tobin tax continued in several fora such as the [Europeans for Social Reform](#) and the [Robin Hood Tax Campaign](#)⁸ Meanwhile the [Taskforce on International Financial Transactions and Development](#) (GSP 10.1) set up by the “Leading Group of countries” continued its work. And the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development (23-24 March) took place with [concluding remarks](#) by President of UNGA⁹ and links to other documents on the [main website](#)¹⁰.

The prospects for, and nature of, the economic recovery after the great banking crisis have also been a major topic of international discussion. The speakers of a [South Centre workshop](#)¹¹ [concluded](#) that “developing countries should draw their own lessons from the global crisis, not to be complacent about the ‘recovery’, and re-think development strategies and policy options, as well as be advocates of international financial reform”¹². Similarly, an [UNU-Wider paper](#) argues that “policy should put more emphasis on long-term growth and

have short-term policies to avoid ‘anti-growth policy syndromes’¹³, and the report “[Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development](#)” of the UN Secretary-General concludes “For Africa, severe social consequences are likely to remain for much longer, even after the recovery gathers pace in advanced economies. The lack of public social safety nets to offset the negative impact of a global recession on individuals and families will likely compound the situation”.¹⁴

Meanwhile UNCTAD points to [falling global foreign direct investment](#) and states that both developed and developing countries are affected¹⁵

Acknowledging these problems, the European Parliament has called upon EU Member States to [fulfil their aid commitments](#)¹⁶ as did OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría for donors, despite [new OECD figures](#)¹⁷ showing continuing growth of 0.7% in development aid in 2009.¹⁸ The OED annual report on ODA warned however that less than half the extra \$25 billion promised at the Gleneagles G7 meeting was being delivered. Other papers are rather pessimistic about the future of ODA, such as [5162. International Aid and Financial Crises in Donor Countries](#)¹⁹, UNU-WIDER WP/01 “[The Triple Crisis and the Global Aid Architecture](#)”²⁰ and World Bank Development Research Group Policy Paper: “[International Aid and Financial Crises in Donor Countries](#)”²¹

Further OECD publications on the topic have included the “[OECD Development Cooperation Report](#)”²², and “[Better Aid: Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness](#)”²³, “[Untying Aid: Is it Working?](#)”²⁴, and “[Donors’ mixed aid performance for 2010 sparks concern](#)”²⁵

Never-the-less claims the IMF “[Despite Crisis, Poor Countries Try to Maintain Social Spending](#)”²⁶

One common way to support developing countries is in terms of progressing the MDGs. A Special [high-level meeting](#) of ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions, the WTO and UNCTAD²⁷ in March [concludes](#) “donors must redouble their efforts to fulfill their ODA commitments. Aid flows must provide budget support to developing countries so that they can have sufficient policy space to invest in education, health, infrastructure and capacity-building. New and innovative sources of development finance should be explored and scaled up”²⁸. Further, as a preparation for the High-level Planning Meeting on the MDGs in September, the [report](#) “Keeping the Promise” was released. It calls “for a new pact to

accelerate progress in achieving the Goals in the coming years among all stakeholders, a commitment towards equitable and sustainable development for all”²⁹. [A preparatory meeting](#) for the ECOSOC DFC, too, gave space to reflecting about the MDGs. Of note here is the “[Guide to the new MDGs Employment Indicators](#)” (including decent work)³⁰. Civil society organisations have [urged](#) the Canadian government, organising this year’s G8 meeting to help pressure the G8 into fulfilling its aid commitments in the fight against HIV/AIDS³¹.

Dr. Frances Stewart Sir. Richard Jolly and Prof. Andrea Cornia launched an important email discussion group on [Recovery with a Human Face](#) echoing the 1987 UNICEF intervention on *Adjustment with a Human face*. They argued “Like Adjustment with a Human Face, this can be achieved. It requires that aid to poor countries is sustained; that expenditure to social services is maintained; and that new schemes are introduced which promote employment, extend decent health services to all and provides cash support, where needed, for the poorest.”³²

More discussion was launched around the specific issue of South-South cooperation. A policy paper by the Better Aid Coordination Group offers a number of [recommendations](#) regarding South-South Development Cooperation³³. A [Reality of Aid report](#) takes a look at the nature, shortcomings and potentials of South-South cooperation from a civil society perspective³⁴. And the [Bogotá Statement on South-South cooperation](#) was released³⁵.

Although donor countries have committed to major increases in development assistance (often not now being delivered) but doubts remain over how effective this aid is. “[Cash on Delivery: A new approach to foreign aid with an application to primary schooling](#)” by the Center for Global Development presents an approach that links aid directly to outcomes in ways that promote accountability and strengthen local institutions. It builds on existing initiatives that strive to disburse aid against results, but it takes the idea further by linking payments more directly to a single specific outcome; giving the recipient country full authority to achieve progress however it sees fit and without interference of any kind from donors³⁶.

REGULATION

An update of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises is underway: The first step in this process took place on 8 December 2009 with a consultation which sought the views of stakeholders and non-adhering governments on the priority areas for an update. In Spring

2010, adhering governments will decide on terms of reference for an update in light of the outcomes of the consultations. More information, including on a consultation process, will be posted on www.oecd.org/daf/investment/guidelines throughout the process.

New is an OECD information brief on [“Promoting transparency and exchange information for tax purposes”](#)³⁷ plus information on [progress implementation](#) made as of 1st April³⁸ Global Forum launched a [peer review process](#) on tax transparency³⁹ and the Tax Justice Network issued a [memorandum](#) on automatic information exchange as the new standard⁴⁰ There is British [cross-party support](#) for transparency measures⁴¹

A new book on [“Tax havens: How Globalization Really Works”](#)⁴² and a briefing entitled [“What hope for global tax justice?”](#) were recently published⁴³. Meanwhile a [GFI Report](#) warned that \$854 Billion have been removed from Africa through illicit financial flows from 1970 to 2008.⁴⁴

Meanwhile the UN Global Compact develops further. In February, 92 companies and 45 non-business stakeholders joined the Global Compact. UN Global Compact [de-lists 859 companies](#) for not communicating on progress⁴⁵. A [coalition of global investors](#) added its voice to the increasing calls for better corporate reporting on environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) activities. The international investor coalition has written to 86 major companies urging them to honour the reporting requirements of the Global Compact⁴⁶.

How and whether to depart from the free market policies of the 1990s in favour of a global Keynesianism and increased global financial regulation continues to be debated. The role of the IMF policy advice is considered central to this. A Bretton Woods project [article](#) stressed that the IMF continues to restrict the policy space of borrowing countries, despite its claims to the contrary. It points out that the IMF still pressures governments to practice fiscal austerity, privatization, and financial system reform. Interestingly, some countries have been praised by the IMF for practicing stimulus, or counter-cyclical, economic policies in the wake of the economic crisis. But ironically, their underlying policy posture on what makes for macroeconomic stability has remained the same⁴⁷. But it is also argued that the “Global crisis leads IMF experts to [rethink long-held ideas](#)”⁴⁸ EDIT: Eurodad releases [“When facts change, I change my mind. What will you do, IMF?”](#)⁴⁹

The OECD International Migration Statistics 2009 provides detailed and internationally comparable data on international migration ([Now available in CD-Rom from the Online Bookshop](#))⁵⁰. An ILO study focuses new attention on adopting a “[rights-based approach](#)” to meet the needs of the world’s 105 million migrant workers⁵¹, while the World Economic Forum is concerned about labour and migration issues in a report “[Stimulating Economies through Fostering Talent Mobility](#)”⁵². Further, the UN tackles [migrant health](#) at its Madrid conference. A joint report by the OECD and WHO focuses on [International Migration of Health Workers](#)⁵³.

Meanwhile available is “[No magic wand: co-development as an integration tool](#)”⁵⁴ And Michael Clemens from the Centre for Global Development [argues](#) that “every rich country should consider its immigration policy to be part of its international development policy and vice versa. A development policy that includes migration will be more effective; an immigration policy that includes development will better serve rich countries’ ideals and interests”⁵⁵.

RIGHTS

The UN Human Rights Council had its 13th session and [adopted a number of resolutions](#), including adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and human rights of persons with disabilities. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food was also extended. Further, the Council adopted texts about the enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights, the Open-ended Working Group on an optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Social Forum⁵⁶. At the occasion of this event, also a CSO report, entitled “[Bringing Human Rights to Bear in Times of Crisis: A human rights analysis of government responses to the economic crisis](#)” was released⁵⁷.

The UN Global compact released good practice notes on human rights. They focus on “[How Business Can Encourage Governments to Fulfil their Human Rights Obligations](#)”⁵⁸ and “[Setting up a Multi-Stakeholder Panel as a Tool for Effective Stakeholder Dialogue](#)”⁵⁹. See also “[ISO 26000: A New Standard for Human Rights](#)”⁶⁰

On children’s rights more specifically is a UNICEF report [Partnering for Children in Emergencies](#) stating that “even greater efforts [are required] in humanitarian settings, where

complex environments complicate efforts to provide the services, protection, recovery and reintegration that are essential to fulfilling the rights of children, women and families”⁶¹.

Preparing for the 65th GA in 2010 “[Strengthening Older People’s Rights: Towards a UN Convention](#)” was published. It argues that “with a new UN convention, and the assistance of a Special Rapporteur, governments can have an explicit legal framework, guidance and support that would enable them to ensure that older people’s rights are realised in our increasingly ageing societies”⁶².

The report “[State of the World's Indigenous Peoples](#)” was released by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs⁶³.

8 March was International Women’s Day focusing on [equal rights, equal opportunities: progress for all](#)⁶⁴. From 1-12 March, the Commission of the Status of Women undertook a [15-year review](#) of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and related initiatives⁶⁵. Also the ECOSOC AMR is under way of preparing its 2010 session on ["Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women"](#)⁶⁶. As outlined by Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper (to host the G8/G20 summits in Canada this year) at the 40th World Economic Forum, Canada will propose a major initiative to improve children’s and maternal health in the poorest regions of the world⁶⁷. UNAIDS [launched an action framework](#) for women and girls with HIV/AIDS⁶⁸. More on women’s rights is in the “[Atlas of Gender and Development](#)” by the OECD⁶⁹. The World Economic Forum came up with “[The Corporate Gender Gap Report](#)”⁷⁰. The Center for Global Development issued a [memo](#) for UNESCO about adolescent girls education⁷¹.

Global Social Governance

Whether its global economic, environmental or social governance the world’s embryonic intergovernmental processes are changing and becoming more contested and complicated. Now it is the G20 versus the UN versus an unreformed IMF/Bank versus a USA driven partial ad-hoc multilateralism involving China, Brazil, India and South Africa while the EU struggles to assert itself.

In March, the UN member states continued their [discussions on UN System-wide coherence](#)⁷², including an evaluation of the “[Delivering as One](#)“ initiative at the country level⁷³. While some positive steps can be recorded at the country level one of the first global level reforms agreed recently seems to be stalling. While [UN Member States](#)⁷⁴ met on 16 February for [informal consultations](#)⁷⁵ on a new [composite gender entity](#)⁷⁶, many have expressed frustrations with the [UN's delayed implementation](#) of this new gender unit. Colette Tamko, coordinator of the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), attributes the inactivity to a lack of cooperation and support from members of the G77 and NAM as well as Russia and Japan. Tamko revealed that several G77 countries even regard gender architecture discussions as a "bargaining chip to advance their still undisclosed agendas."⁷⁷

Charlotte Bunch and June Zeitlin of the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) campaign [suggest](#) that the UN's existing women's entities are incapable of responding to the needs of member states for help in meeting their obligations under CEDAW, the MDGs and other international agreements⁷⁸.

One policy field where the One-UN initiative seems to be gaining momentum in terms of inter-UN agency co-operation at the international level is the Global Social Protection Floor policy being lead by ILO and WHO with UNICEF heavily involved. A [presentation](#) was delivered by Isabel Ortiz, Gaspar Fajth and Jennifer Yablonski of UNICEF at the Social Development Advisors Network meeting in New York, 8 February 2010⁷⁹. This is discussed in more detail in the Social Protection section.

Secretary-General of UNCTAD; Supachai Panitchpakdi told the [122nd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union \(IPU\)](#) on March 29th that "the crisis provides a rare opportunity to forge a more balanced and inclusive global economy through two channels: measured government intervention and strategic policy action at the national level, and better coordinated and more inclusive economic decision-making at the international level."⁸⁰ A different take on the governance issue is provided by the ILO in a new book which looks at how the process of consultation and negotiation between governments, employers' and workers' representatives, in other words tripartism altered the pace, sequence and content of the neo-liberal reforms of the 1980 and 1990s. ILO Online spoke to Lydia Fraile, the editor of "[Blunting neoliberalism: Tripartism and economic reform in the developing world](#)"⁸¹.

UNDESA with the support of the Social Policy and Development Secretariat once again organised the February Commission on Social Development which passed a number of worthy [resolutions](#) on **Promoting Social Integration, Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda, the Social Dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and Future Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002**⁸².

In relation to the vexed question of regulating global taxes (see regulation section above) and global banking the debate about whether this should be at national level or international level which would strengthen global governance continues. Two recent articles question the proposals for greater international financial coordination suggested by [Strauss Kahn](#)⁸³. [Joseph Stiglitz](#) warns that “given the difficulties in achieving global co-ordination, insisting on such co-ordination may be a recipe for paralysis – just what the bankers who don't want regulations want. It is perhaps no surprise that they have become among the most vocal advocates of the need for global action.”⁸⁴ Similarly, [Dani Rodrik](#) stresses that “in a world of divided political sovereignty and diverse national preferences, the push for international harmonization is a recipe for weak and ineffective rules. That is one reason why international bankers love international coordination.”⁸⁵

Never-the-less the slightly diminished and diminishing influential band of northern social democrats clustered around the [Progressive Governance Conference](#) held in February offered some interesting reflections on the prospects for improved global governance⁸⁶. Among these was speech from the increasingly radical [Pascal Lamy](#)⁸⁷. “The priorities of progressives must be shifted from the State level to the world level, and global regulation of market capitalism needs to be given the same importance as the introduction of the Welfare State in the 19th century. These regulations must be applied first and foremost to the sectors of international life that have already been identified: macroeconomics, health, environment, human rights, social standards, trade, to name but a few. From there, they must be extended to the financial activities sector, where the recent crisis revealed a big hole in international regulations in what was undoubtedly the most globalized sector. And finally, it must embrace the sectors that have been left aside, such as taxation, energy or migrations”. The only way to address this problem is to imagine, and then build, new alliances with the countries that are now at the negotiating table: China, India, Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, South Africa, Egypt, and many others.. On the face of it, trying to explain to party leaders who are yawning their way through meetings of the European Socialist Party that their priority task is to start working on

the political front with the Congress Party in India, the Workers' Party in Brazil or the Communist Party in China is, certainly, a formidable challenge“

At the same time, a number of states (Global Governance Group) is [concerned](#) about the possibility that the G20 might upstage the United Nations as the major political and economic forum⁸⁸. While African leaders have [called](#) for support for the World Bank to help developing countries cope with the financial crisis⁸⁹.

The World Economic Forum convened under the topic “Improve the State of the World: Rethink, Redesign, Rebuild”, featuring among the thematic pillars “how to strengthen economic and social welfare. Among the [high-level ideas and priorities emerging](#) from the meeting was to “draft new rules for the governance of globalization” (“institutional reboot”), to “develop new metrics that integrate social goals and values”, and to “drive the world’s response to the most pressing global risks through values and the protection of people’s rights to address systemic problems”⁹⁰

The Spring Meetings of the World Bank and IMF in April did not produce any radical shifts in global governance arrangements. According to the [Breton Woods Project](#)⁹¹ the Development Committee [communiqué](#) confirmed small changes in voting share in the Bank that were already widely expected. The final shift in voting power at the IBRD, the Bank's middle-income country lending arm was just 3.13%. This means that 'developing and transition countries' (DTCs) now have just over 47% of the vote, but the way the World Bank classifies DTCs means that some high income countries are included in this figure - the real share of voting power for developing countries excluding these high income economies is now just over 42%.⁹² However in a strategic forward looking [document](#) some other changes in bank focus and priorities were suggested.⁹³

The Spring Meetings assessed the impact of the crisis on the MDG using the “[Global Monitoring Report 2010](#)”⁹⁴ and a [summary](#) produced for the meeting⁹⁵. This urged developing countries to address their fiscal deficits rather than continue with “unsustainable” fiscal stimulus packages.

International Actors and Social Policy

HEALTH

Currently in the absence of any major health event, health issues continued to be subject to several gatherings and reports in the period under review.

The WHO's [Executive Board](#) WHO came together in January. The discussions covered the implementation of International Health Regulations (EB126/5); public health, innovation and intellectual property (EB126/6); the health-related MDGs (EB126/7)⁹⁶.

In March, about 30 donors to the Global Fund met in The Hague, Netherlands, to [review global health progress and assess funding needs](#) for the period 2011-2013⁹⁷. The UN DESA came together for its 43rd session (12-16 April) discussing [Health, morbidity, mortality and development](#)⁹⁸.

A Health Systems Funding Platform is [further being developed](#) by the World Bank, GAVI, the Global Fund and the WHO with the objective to “improve health outcomes through strengthening countries’ health systems to deliver health services equitably and sustainably (focussing on all health MDGs) and to use resources more effectively and efficiently”, and as a possible mechanism for mobilising and making better use of new and existing funds for Health Systems Strengthening (HSS)⁹⁹. At the same time, the Global Health Council advocates for global health through G8 and G20 Summits launching a [new webpage](#)¹⁰⁰. And the European Commission adopted a [communication](#) on the role of the EU in global health that will lead to EU Council conclusions during its May-session¹⁰¹.

The Global Fund has [introduced a new grant architecture](#)¹⁰²; and a general [Progress Report](#) of the Global Fund has been released¹⁰³.

The role and importance of national and global health systems has been the topic of a number of publications and workshops. The WHO Department of Health System Financing discusses [ten questions about introducing social health insurance](#)¹⁰⁴, while a World Bank [paper](#) by Adam Wagstaff deals with the question if government health expenditures were more pro-rich than we think¹⁰⁵. Catherine Connor, Deputy Director of [HealthSystems20/20](#)¹⁰⁶ debunks global misconceptions about health systems in a [blog](#)¹⁰⁷. A [series of articles](#) discuss global health systems and institutional frameworks¹⁰⁸.

A number of organisations, including the Gates Foundation, German GTZ, the ILO and the World Bank convened at a [Joint Learning Workshop on Universal Health Coverage](#) in February¹⁰⁹.

A WTO [Paper](#) by Rudolf Adlung asks about the GATS role in supporting trade healthcare and health insurance services¹¹⁰; while the OECD seems to be more inclined now than earlier to utter concrete health policy advice, when Jeremy Hurst asks about “[Effective Ways to Realise Policy Reforms in Health Systems](#)”¹¹¹.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

As reported in GSP 10.1 the Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPF-I) is an agreement mandated by the UN Chief Executive Board (CEB) in April 2009. [Fact sheet SPF-I](#)¹¹² and [SPF-Brochure](#) for contact details of the global focal points¹¹³. ILO and WHO are lead agencies at the global level, but leading and cooperating agencies may vary at the country level. The Social Protection Floor Initiative support countries to establish a minimum level of access to essential services and income security for all. Grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ILO Campaign on the extension of Social Security to all, it focuses on two critical components: Services: ensuring the availability, continuity, geographical and financial access to essential services such as water and sanitation, adequate nutrition, health and education, housing, and other services including life and asset saving information Transfers: realizing access to services and providing a minimum income and livelihood security through a set of essential social transfers, in cash and in kind throughout the life cycle (children, working life, old persons) paying particular attention to vulnerable groups. A [SPF-I manual](#) with guidelines for country operations on the strategic framework for joint UN country operations is distributed to UN country teams¹¹⁴. In a number of country activities where UN agencies closely collaborate, the implementation of a SPF is already under way (Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Maldives, Mozambique). The challenge now is to mainstream the concept of a SPF into regular activities of the agencies, and to integrate it into existing national planning processes. For further information on the SPF-I, please click [here](#)¹¹⁵.

At this moment the ILO and the UNDP Special Unit for South-South Cooperation are [inviting nominations](#) for initiatives with successful social protection floor experiences in the

global South. Selected nominees will be asked to develop a case study of the Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPF-I) and to present and discuss their experience at an international workshop in Turin, Italy in July 2010. The case studies will be published by the UNDP Special Unit for South-South cooperation as volume 17 of the series: Sharing Innovative Experiences¹¹⁶.

Based on an unofficial update from the OECD-POVNET-meetings in March 2011. An overwhelming majority of POVNET-members strongly supported the "Global Social Protection Floor" as one of the three priority topics in the [POVNET Programme of Work and Budget](#)¹¹⁷ (PWB) 2011-12. 2) The document (p. 8-10) shows the way the Social Protection activity is described at the moment in the POVNET-PWB 2011-12. The final decision about the entire DAC-PWB-2011-12, including POVNET, will be made by DAC only sometime in June. However, the POVNET membership's support for Social Protection as one of the themes was so clear that it would be unlikely that the DAC would want to overrule the network members' clearly indicated wishes in the June meeting. So, let's count on POVNET providing another, parallel, track for promoting the SPF-I, in agencies and at country level.

The [World Day for Social Justice](#) on Feb 20th drew global attention to efforts to eradicate poverty and promote social well-being, equality and full and decent employment. In 2010 this search for a "society for all" faces severe challenges brought on by the global economic and jobs crises, resurging poverty and long-term social uncertainty. Against this backdrop, the ILO has launched a year-long Voices on Social Justice Campaign to provide a global platform for perspectives on what social justice means today and how it might be achieved in the years to come. The following voices will be joined by those of other commentators, academics, activists and leaders throughout the year¹¹⁸: [Mr. Daniel Funes de Rioja](#), [Ms. Sharan Burrow](#), [Ms. Marlee Matlin](#), [Ms. Shakira Mebarak Ripoll](#), [Ms. Shirin Ebadi](#), [Mr. Juan Somavia](#), [Mr. Guy Ryder](#), [Mr. Antonio Penalosa](#), [Ambassador Maria Nazareth Farani Azevêdo](#), [Mr. Kofi Annan](#), [Mr. Pascal Lamy](#), [Mr. Alain Supiot](#)

In terms of minimum income policies in developed economies see [“Minimum Income Benefits in OECD Countries: Policy Design, Effectiveness and Challenges”](#) by Herwig Immervoll¹¹⁹.

[“Rethinking Poverty UN Report on the World Social Situation”](#) 2010 seeks to contribute to rethinking poverty and policies and practices of recent decades towards more sustainable development- and equity-oriented policies appropriate to national conditions and

circumstances. The most important lesson is that governments need to play a developmental role, integrating economic and social policies that support inclusive output and employment growth, while attacking inequality and promoting justice¹²⁰.

Also concerned to rethink poverty away from the “global politics of poverty alleviation towards to global politics of welfare state building” is the revamped [CROP web site](#). Attention is drawn both to the human rights dimension of poverty alleviation but also for states to the need to meet the welfare needs of the middle class as well as the poor to ensure effective developmental states¹²¹.

In a similar vein is a [paper](#) by Nancy Birdsall of the Centre for Global Development. “The (Indispensable) Middle Class in Developing Countries; or, The Rich and the Rest, Not the Poor and the Rest” argues that the concept of inclusive growth should go beyond the traditional emphasis on the poor (and the rest) and take into account changes in the size and economic command of the group conventionally defined as neither poor nor rich, i.e., the middle class¹²².

See also “[From Social Safety Net to Social Policy? The role of conditional cash transfers in welfare state development in Latin America](#)” by Francesca Bastagli¹²³. The name change from the UNDP International Poverty Centre to the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth is indicative of this global paradigm shift in the making.

Meanwhile the Commission for Social Development 48th Session, 3 to 12 February 2010, New York took “[Social Integration](#)” as its theme¹²⁴.

“[Recession and Recovery: The Lucky are Unemployed](#)” discusses as the world rebounds from the economic crisis, unemployment rates are higher in the richest countries. But statistics may conceal more than they reveal. While lower unemployment rates may prevail in poor countries, the ILO suggests that there is an alarming number of working poor and those in vulnerable employment. This IPS editorial points to a massive “decent work” deficit world wide as the most serious issue in the long run¹²⁵. See also “[World of Work report](#)”¹²⁶ and “[Global Jobs Crisis, Promoting Employment Recovery While Meeting Fiscal Goals](#)”¹²⁷ and “[Action on jobs](#)”¹²⁸

The United Nations Population Division published online “[World population Ageing 2009](#)”. It updates the 2007 edition, provides a description of global trends in population ageing and

includes a series of indicators of the ageing process by development regions, major areas, regions and countries. This new edition includes new features on ageing in rural and urban areas, the coverage of pension systems and the impact of the 2007-2008 financial crisis on pension systems¹²⁹.

A Policy Brief, “[Children and Economic Growth](#)” by Save the Children emphasizes how political orthodoxy around economic growth leaves vulnerable people out of the equation. The brief urges a discussion that brings together economic growth, equity and poverty reduction. The Brief says that while growth is a policy imperative of low income countries, countries with moderate rather than high rates of economic growth achieve better child mortality and under-nutrition results. Too often growth and social policies are pursued on separate tracks¹³⁰.

Back at the Bank there is the Independent Evaluation Group World Bank Report: “[Analyzing the Effects of Policy Reforms on the Poor: An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of World Bank Support to Poverty and Social Impact Analyses](#)”¹³¹ and a [new book](#) reviewing the implications of the shift to asset-backed defined contribution pensions in the context of the global economic crisis¹³².

In terms of a model for future global social policy which might be shaped increasingly by China’s engagement with the OECD the [OECD progress report](#)’s recommendations are of interest. OECD Economic Survey of China calls for¹³³: ‘**Unifying social safety nets**’, ‘**Facilitating labour mobility**’, ‘Consolidating pension regimes’ and ‘**Pushing ahead with health care reform**’

EDUCATION

The [EFA Global monitoring report](#) has been published in January 2010, with an emphasis on ‘reaching the marginalized’. The report analyzes progress of the Education for All initiative, but also assesses shortcomings, e.g. the cuts in government spending due to the financial crisis.¹³⁴ Such impacted in particular on those groups that are already excluded from many educational opportunities. A related [high level meeting](#) of the Education for All Initiative took place in Addis Ababa in January, discussing the report and also focusing on the impact of the financial crisis.¹³⁵ A [meeting](#) with non-governmental actors followed the high-level meeting, exploring ways how non-governmental actors can support education after the financial crisis.¹³⁶

India, the world largest democracy, recently made an important step toward guaranteeing basic education as part of the EFA goals: On April 1, a [national act](#) on the right to free and compulsory schooling for children from six to 14 years has become effective.¹³⁷ Currently, several million children in India are out of school. The World Bank will provide more than 1 billion USD for [financing education reforms](#) in India this year.¹³⁸

Next year's [monitoring report](#) will focus on education and violent conflict.¹³⁹ The next EFA high level meeting will take place in Thailand. UNESCO has recently published reports on how to protect and pursue education in [post-conflict or post-disaster settings](#)¹⁴⁰. It also sent out support for the [Haitian education system](#) after the earthquake in January.¹⁴¹

The 2010 report of the UNESCO Institute on Statistics will be launched in June, focusing on the issue of gender in education and training. An [online forum](#) on related matters had been established in February.¹⁴² A further [conference](#) has taken place on recognition of informal education and the link to qualification frameworks. Such recognition procedures can support labor market access for groups that remained outside the formal education system. Such individuals may have qualifications, but cannot use them due to a lack of formal certification.¹⁴³

The upcoming [Global Action Week](#) for education will focus on donor financing of education, in particular on realizing the commitments announced at the G8 summit in Gleneagles in 2005.¹⁴⁴ Also [Education International](#) participates in the Global Action Week.¹⁴⁵

The World Bank is about to draft its [new education sector strategy](#), to be finalized in November.¹⁴⁶

In March, the IFC organized a [conference](#) on best examples of private provision of education.¹⁴⁷ The IFC supports several private education providers in developing countries.

For the very first time, the World Economic Forum in Davos held [sessions on education](#) (January 29 & 30), including a UNESCO representative.¹⁴⁸ Questions considered were related to education and development.

FOOD POLICY

The [estimated number](#) of hungry people has remained constant at about 1 billion.¹⁴⁹ Food prices in early 2010 have mostly [fallen](#) compared to the 2008 peak¹⁵⁰, but are [still higher](#) than before the crisis¹⁵¹. Prices have also still [risen sharply](#) in some Sub-Saharan countries.¹⁵²

The comprehensive framework for action is currently being revised, a [consultation process](#) has taken place that ended in March.¹⁵³ A [meeting](#) of the high-level taskforce on global food security was held in January 2010, reporting on the current situation of food security, also with a view to Haiti.¹⁵⁴

There is, however, increased activity on the regional level. In January, a [meeting of the world regions on food security](#) took place, assembling countries, regional and global organizations in striving for food security.¹⁵⁵ The outcomes has been the [Dakar Declaration](#),¹⁵⁶ in which a more central role for regions is promoted, including a more comprehensive policy coordination across policy fields and among regions. Also the WTO Doha round should acknowledge the critical issue of food security and the prevention from low-cost imports that threaten food production in developing countries.

HABITAT, LAND AND HOUSING

In 2009, a session of the UK House of Commons' International Development Committee examined the challenges of urbanisation and Poverty in a [report](#)¹⁵⁷ which has culminated in its latest publication entitled – [“Cities: The New Frontier”](#)¹⁵⁸.

The [World Urban Campaign](#) (WUC) was launched at the Fifth World Urban Forum held in Rio de Janeiro in March 2010. UN-HABITAT notes that the ‘World Urban Campaign is a platform for public, private and civil society actors to elevate policies and share practical tools for sustainable urbanization. The success of the Campaign will be measured by more sustainable urban policies at the national level and increased investment and capital flows in support of those policies. For this reason it focuses on providing governments and partner networks with an advocacy instrument to articulate a shared vision for a better urban future and to advance the urban agenda within their respective constituencies’¹⁵⁹.

The right price of water can encourage efficiency and investment say three new books published by OECD announced in a [website](#) with videos and graphs¹⁶⁰. These books are: [“Pricing Water Resources and Water and Sanitation Services”](#)¹⁶¹, [“Sustainable Management of Water Resources in Agriculture”](#)¹⁶² and [“Innovative Financing Mechanisms for the Water Sector”](#).¹⁶³

Vast amounts of water are used to produce food, clothes and other consumer goods. As a global water crisis looms, matters of water accountability are growing more important. Individuals should be aware of their personal water usage (and wastage). The "water

footprint" of an individual is defined as the total volume of freshwater that is used to produce the goods and services consumed by that individual. This [interactive tool](#) shows how much water is used, directly and indirectly, to produce different commodities- revealing unexpected "hidden water" usage¹⁶⁴.

Meanwhile, WHO and UNICEF have published an [update report](#) on sanitation and drinking water¹⁶⁵.

A new book, "[Building Cities: Neighbourhood Upgrading and Urban Quality of Life](#)" has been published by the Inter-American Development Bank. The blurb notes:

Building Cities reviews the experiences of the Latin American and Caribbean region in the design and implementation of neighbourhood upgrading programmes. The volume has a particular focus on the lessons learned by specialists of the Inter-American Development Bank and their technical and managerial counterparts in the agencies that execute the loans granted for neighbourhood upgrading. *Building Cities* analyses the different dimensions of the problems, discusses successful experiences in the region, and draws useful conclusions to help take on the challenges faced by cities of developing countries around the world.¹⁶⁶

Trade and Social Policy

In the WTO [public measures for public health](#) become a discussion point concerning proposed alcohol labels in Thailand, which require specific health advisory statements to be displayed on the packaging of beverages. Seven members, including European Union, United States and Australia, have raised concern over these measures, which are considered to create unnecessary obstacles to trade and that less restrictive measures, such as public information campaigns could be used to achieve the same objective. According to WTO, Members also said 'that the labelling requirements could mislead the consumer by informing them that drinking any level of alcohol, even moderately, could lead to health problems.'¹⁶⁷ This [dispute](#) is interesting in the context of global policy and politics of alcohol as the WHO draft alcohol strategy, to be discussed in World Health Assembly in May 2010, explicitly states that in reducing the negative consequences of drinking and alcohol intoxication policy options and interventions include 'providing consumer information about, and labelling alcoholic beverages to indicate, the harm related to alcohol. In Tobacco, the discussion concerning an earlier prohibition of using certain additives in tobacco and tobacco products in Canada continued as complaints were made in terms of consequences of these measures to "blended"

cigarettes. Canada responded and stressed that it only prohibited certain additives which increase the attractiveness of tobacco products for young people, not the sale of tobacco¹⁶⁸.

Another trade-related development in the field of tobacco control is that Philip Morris subsidiaries in Uruguay have filed for arbitration with the World Bank's International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes, claiming violations of the Switzerland-Uruguay bilateral investment treaty. The dispute concerns a public health -related change in labelling laws, which are to cover 80% of the packaging and are seen by tobacco companies to prevent them from displaying effectively their trademarks. According to ICTSD [report](#) on the matter, the company argues that in this case Uruguay has expropriated its intellectual property without compensation, has failed to treat its investment fairly and equitably; and has unreasonably impaired the use of its investment. The tobacco case is important in bringing up the scope for litigation and challenge of public health regulatory measures on matters, where states would not necessarily be willing to act¹⁶⁹.

In the field of medicines and intellectual property rights WTO [discussions](#) have applied to the failure of Member States to use the so called para 6 mechanisms for importation of medicines under compulsory license as well as India and Brasil complaints over EU detention of medicines in transit.¹⁷⁰

However, in the global policy scene the WTO has remained on the sidelines as the main interest is focussed on the unfolding of the so-called Anti-Counterfeiting Treaty (ACTA) negotiations and bilateral treaties, in particular those negotiated by the European Union. In spite of secretive negotiations, the [whole text](#) of ACTA has also finally leaked to the public domain.¹⁷¹ ACTA has also been discussed more broadly, including in the European Parliament, which adopted a [resolution](#) on transparency and state of play in ACTA negotiations.¹⁷² The EU-India FTA has also been a focus for [campaigning](#) and analysis in relation to the fate of the proposed social clauses, gender implications and impacts on access to medicines.¹⁷³ EU-Central America FTA has raised concerns in particular in relation to its enforcement provisions, which according to ip-watch reporting are feared to [increase the risk of wrongful medicines seizures](#).¹⁷⁴

Different types of social clauses or provisions have become part of negotiations of bilateral agreements. Additional resources and follow-up in the area can be found from the ILO dedicated [website](#) on FTAs and labour rights.¹⁷⁵ Canada-Colombia FTA has been claimed to be the first one to include a [human rights impact assessment](#) to a trade agreement¹⁷⁶. Social

security of migrants and portability of social security of migrants have also become issues in the context of [social security agreements](#).¹⁷⁷ However, portability of social security has become a trade-related issue also in a more commercial context of medical travel or "tourism" markets. This is reflected in the WTO negotiations on "mode 2" (consumption abroad) commitments as part of trade agreements. Portability of social insurance would enable further growth of the global trade in medical travel and outsourcing on the basis that it would provide financial arrangements for sending, encouraging or allowing patients to be operated abroad (see, in particular, articles in this journal).

Labour conditions have also become under further scrutiny and are likely to be further highlighted in the broader context of labour rights and conditions. One example is the new [report](#) by Consumers International examines whether European supermarkets were living up to their responsibilities with respect to labour conditions in developing countries.¹⁷⁸

The focus on measures against trafficking of persons and child labour has become a more international and important matter, not only in the context of reports of campaigns on specific trade issues, such as [cocoa trade](#)¹⁷⁹, but as well for the cooperation of various international agencies. See the new [Framework for Action to Implement the Trafficking of Persons Protocol](#)¹⁸⁰. Trafficking in humans was brought up also in the context of human rights in the 13th session of [Human Rights Council](#)¹⁸¹

OECD, WTO and UNCTAD have produced a [report](#) on G20 trade and investment measures¹⁸². South Centre released a new book on [Debt and Trade: making linkages for development](#)¹⁸³.

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