

FAC Meetings Series, Autumn 2007

Future Agricultures: from broad themes to practical policy

Early in the new century a consensus on agricultural and rural development emerged that provided renewed impetus to efforts to boost both agricultural development and the rural non-farm economy, in a context of ever closer rural-urban linkages and globalisation. Both governments and donors have committed themselves to support this.

The challenge has been to translate themes into practical policy. For two years the Future Agricultures Consortium, supported by DFID, has been investigating how to do this, primarily in Ethiopia, Kenya and Malawi.

This set of meetings presents the results of this work. It also includes the World Bank presenting the 2008 World Development Report on Agriculture and Development, and two sessions on the way forward and whether or not emerging challenges from biofuels, climate change, and the growth of China and India imply that the agenda needs radical revision.

Venue: ODI, Timing: 13.00–14.30

Date	Topic, speakers	Lead person, Notes
30 Oct	Reforming agricultural policy: Kenya's impasse and Malawian dilemmas in international perspective How easy is it to make fundamental changes to agricultural policy? In the past Bangladesh, China, Chile, and NZ, for example, have made such changes. Their experience and the contemporary case of Kenya & Malawi will be reviewed.	CP Two-part presentation: the historical cases; and then insights from Kenya & Malawi
13 Nov	Social protection and agricultural development	Two-hander: Stephen Devereux —new seasonalities; Rachel Slater & colleagues — cash transfers
19 Nov	World Development Report 2008: Agriculture & Development	World Bank presentation
27 Nov	Testing the limits of state action: the Malawi fertiliser subsidy Subsidising fertiliser runs against conventional economic advice that the state should limit its action to providing purely public goods. But with extensive failures in credit and input markets might it make sense for the state to subsidise fertiliser?	AD
05 Dec	The way forward: influencing policy and generating evidence How can the evidence we have be used to influence policy-makers? And what may be the priorities for research on agricultural and rural development for the next 5–10 years?	Report back from the workshop of 20 November [Who will present?]
17 Dec	Debate: Does the agenda need radical revision? Have biofuels, climate change, and rapid economic growth in China and India changed the context so much that agricultural development needs to be rethought?	Run as a short debate: with two speakers, one for, the other against. [Find speakers]

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