

MEDIA BRIEFING

The G8 and G20 Summits, June 2010

What's at stake? In 2000 world leaders made a promise to the world's poorest people to halve poverty by 2015 and to put people first. But promises don't make nutritious meals. Ten years later, a billion people around the world go to bed hungry, 25,000 people die every day because of hunger related causes, and we are not on track to meet the goals for 2015. Five years ago, the G8 promised to increase aid by \$50 billion, but the OECD estimates that even this promise has been missed by as much as \$20 billion. On their pledge to deliver a \$25 billion increase in aid to Africa, donors are falling short to the tune of \$13 billion - over of half of what they promised. While many cite the economic crisis as an excuse, the poorest people must not pay the price for the rich world's financial folly.

Who has done what? Five years after the historic summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, the G8 have largely failed to deliver for poor people. France, Germany, Italy and the UK made ambitious promises in 2005, but only the UK is anywhere close to delivering on its targets. Canada is still inching towards the modest target it set for itself, while Japan has failed to deliver on its meager 2005 commitment. And while the US has delivered the small increase that it promised in 2005, it still provides a tiny portion of its national income in aid compared with the European members of the G8. Cuts in crucial international funding are feared, as Italy recently slashed its aid budget, citing the economic crisis as an excuse. But with the impact of the financial crisis crashing across poor country borders, the poorest need help now more than ever.

What must rich countries do? The G8 club of rich nations must to look beyond their own economic struggles and set out how they will fulfill the promises to poor countries made in 2005. Oxfam is calling on the G20 to also step up to the plate on global poverty. An emergency plan to deliver the \$50 billion promised by 2012, and a timetable of increases to reach 0.7% of national income by 2015 is now due. And this must be new money, not money shuffled within shrinking aid budgets, forcing the poor choose between food on the table and healthcare.

How should they do it? When considering how the financial sector should repay the costs of the economic crisis, the G20 have an opportunity and a responsibility to help poor countries hit by a crisis they did nothing to cause. This should include innovative sources of financing to fight poverty and climate change, such as a financial transaction tax.

Does aid really work? Where aid has increased it has made a massive difference, helping to reduce the number of children who die before their fifth birthday by 4 million since 1990, put 33 million more children in the classroom, and increase tenfold the number of people receiving HIV/AIDS medication. But many challenges remain. Around 350,000 women every year die preventable deaths in childbirth. In Sub-Saharan Africa, one in seven children die before their fifth birthday. And on current trends, 56 million primary aged children will still be out of school in 2015.

What's Oxfam? We are a development and humanitarian organization working with local partners in over 80 countries around the world. We call on G8 and G20 leaders to deliver on their promises and invest in the future. Now.

Who should you talk to? In this briefing pack you will find short biographies of spokespeople available for interviews in Toronto, as well as short briefings on key issues at the Summits: maternal and child health, agriculture and food security, climate change and the financial transaction tax. We will be issuing comments and reactions throughout the Summits. To ensure you receive all our updates and advisories, please send your contact details to one of the e-mail addresses below. Do not hesitate to contact any of us should you require any additional information.

Sincerely,
The Oxfam Media Team

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Oxfam Spokespersons

Robert Fox [Executive Director, Oxfam Canada] attended last year's G8 Summit at L'Aquila and can talk about aid effectiveness, G8 accountability, maternal mortality and climate change, as well as Canada as G8/G20 host. *Interviews in English.*

Pierre Veronneau [Executive Director, Oxfam-Québec] can speak about food insecurity, aid commitments, broken promises, maternal health and climate change. *Interviews in French.*

Carlos Zarco [Executive Director, Oxfam Mexico] has published books and articles on Social Development, Education and Active citizenship. He can speak to development and education. *Interviews in Spanish and English.*

Mark Fried [Policy Coordinator, Oxfam Canada] has been following development policy issues for Oxfam since 1994 and has attended G8 and G20 summits since 2002. He can speak to aid commitments, maternal health, food security, and the FTT. *Interviews in English, Spanish and French.*

Max Lawson [Head of Development Finance, Oxfam Great Britain] is a regular member of Oxfam's G8 and G20 summit teams and was heavily involved in the Make Poverty History campaign in 2005. He has specialist knowledge on aid, the FTT, and public health services in developing countries.

Robert Bailey [Senior Policy Adviser on Climate Change, Oxfam Great Britain] has long worked on climate change and agriculture issues, including work on biofuels and renewable energy. *Interviews in English.*

Lina Holguin [Policy Director, Oxfam-Québec] has worked in the field of international development and humanitarian aid for many years and has attended G8 Summits since 2002. She can speak on maternal health, food security, aid and the FTT. *Interviews in Spanish, French and English.*

Farida Bena [Rome Head of Office, Oxfam International, working in partnership with Italian NGO Ucodep] is an expert on aid, the FTT, health and education and can also speak to climate change and food and agriculture issues. Farida has worked in the field of international cooperation and humanitarian aid since 1998. *Interviews in Italian, English and French.*

Sebastien Fourmy [Policy and Advocacy Director, Oxfam France] has worked on development policy since 2002, especially on ODA, health, agriculture and food security, FTT, World Bank and IMF and climate change. *Interviews in French and English.*

Takumo Yamada [Advocacy Manager, Oxfam Japan]

Takumo Yamada is a specialist on essential services and aid, especially from a Japanese perspective. *Interviews in Japanese and English.*

Joern Kalinski [Head of Lobby and Advocacy, Oxfam Germany] is one of the founders of Oxfam Germany and can speak to the role of Germany in the G8 and G20. *Interviews in German.*

Vitaliy Kartamyshev [Policy Adviser, Russian Federation, Oxfam Great Britain] is a specialist on health care and other essential services and can also speak to the role of the Russian Federation in the G8 and G20. *Interviews in French, English, Italian and Russian.*

Dorothy Ngoma [Executive Director of the National Organization of Nurses and Midwives of Malawi] has 32 years of experience working as a nurse, training nurses and advocating on behalf of nurses in Malawi. *Interviews in English.*

Bill Nighy [Actor and Oxfam Global Ambassador] has seen first-hand how aid can work if done right through his work with Oxfam. Bill, who is best known for his appearance in *Love Actually* and *Pirates of the Caribbean*, alongside the upcoming Harry Potter finale, will be available for interviews in Huntsville and in Toronto. *Interviews in English.*

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Invest in the Future: Invest in Agriculture

In 2000, world leaders promised to halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by 2015. But today, the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target on Hunger is dangerously off-track. With only a few years to go, we need bold and ambitious action by all governments.

More than one billion people will go hungry today. The dramatic increase in hunger in the last few years is the result of the food price crisis in 2008 and the global financial crisis that followed swiftly behind. But even before these crises, the international community was failing to reduce hunger. To make things worse, climate change is already exacerbating volatility in yields and markets and undermining food availability and the livelihoods of millions of people, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Because of climate change, the number of people at risk of hunger is projected to increase by 50 million by 2050 without urgent and bold action.

Women are particularly hard hit by hunger and are also a key part of the solution to hunger. Women in developing countries produce 60 to 80% of the food and play a crucial role in feeding their families and communities. In Sub-Saharan Africa, they represent 70 to 75% of the agricultural labor work force in farming, fishing, and pastoralism. However, small-scale women food producers are often alone in trying to cope with climate change impacts, and they face inequalities in access to land, water, markets, and credit. Less than 20% of landowners are women. Both donor and developing country governments are failing to implement adequate policies or provide sufficient support to enable women small scale food producers to feed themselves, their families and their communities.

The fight against hunger will not be won by handing out food. The G8 and other rich nations must dramatically increase aid for agriculture and food security by at least \$48 billion a year, half of the additional financing Oxfam calculates is needed to achieve the MDG target on hunger. Innovative sources of finance, such as a financial transaction tax, could play a crucial role in reaching this target. These resources must be invested in developing country-led plans to increase the long-term capabilities of poor people to produce their own food and increase their resilience to shocks. Rich countries can begin by delivering on their commitment made at the 2009 G8 in L'Aquila, Italy, to provide \$22 billion for food security by 2012.

Beyond additional resources, the G8 and other donor countries must also significantly improve their policies, coordination and aid with developing countries' plans and priorities. This can be achieved by setting up an effective financial coordination mechanism for the G8-backed umbrella the Global Partnership on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition, to ensure donor alignment with developing country-led national and regional plans and funds. This must be closely linked with the UN's high-level Committee on World Food Security, which must be fully empowered to lead global food security policy, taking the urgent decisions needed to improve the coordination of international efforts and global policy coherence.

L'Aquila commitments unpacked

At the last G8 Summit in L'Aquila, 13 donors committed to "substantially increase aid to agriculture and food security," pledging \$22 billion over 3 years to be used to support a "coordinated, comprehensive strategy focused on sustainable agricultural development." Oxfam welcomed this renewed commitment to increase aid for agriculture and specifically their pledge to support national and regional plans that focus on smallholder farmers, particularly women. We also welcomed OECD and donor efforts to ensure accountability by reporting on progress in delivering this promise at the G8/20 Summit. This accountability report should provide adequate transparency to ensure that donors are not playing games with the numbers. Oxfam will analyze pledges of donors to ensure that the L'Aquila Initiative will make a difference for those suffering hunger.

To achieve the MDG target on hunger will require new and additional investments. Promising already planned disbursements or money already spent will not help. Freezing aid spending, raiding aid resources for other priorities, or actually reducing aid, as Italy has, will not help the hundreds of millions women that are alone in their every day unfair fight against hunger and poverty.

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Invest in the Future: Invest in Climate Resilience

Climate change is the single greatest threat to development, making the battle to overcome poverty and hunger ever harder and more expensive. The impacts of climate change on people's lives range from storms, floods, droughts, sickness, shifting seasons to desertification and rising sea levels. For poor people who are already living on the margins, a small increase in climate risk can have catastrophic consequences, especially small scale women food producers.

Poor people are least responsible for the changing climate but are hit first and hardest. They are particularly vulnerable because they lack resources and social protection systems to recover from climate shocks or to sustain their livelihoods.

Climate adaptation measures are urgently needed to build resilience and reduce vulnerability. Drought-tolerant or flood-tolerant crop varieties, new irrigation and rainwater-harvesting techniques, early warning systems to reduce risk and damage from floods or tropical cyclones could make a world of difference. Social protection systems can help people recover from shocks, as can climate-indexed insurance systems.

Finance is urgently needed to help vulnerable communities adapt to a changing climate. Last year the World Bank estimated the costs of adaptation in poor countries were \$75–100 billion per year if global warming was kept to 2°C. The non-binding pledges from rich countries to cut emissions offered since Copenhagen could steer a course towards a catastrophic 4°C. Mitigating climate change is not only about how much rich countries cut their emissions, but also how they help developing countries curb theirs. Emerging economies and poorer countries must now pursue more expensive development paths than the ones rich countries followed. More money will be needed to meet the extra costs of clean development in developing countries.

Climate finance is an investment in a common future. Rich countries cannot only fight climate change at home and win; they need to help poor countries. In the current economic climate the sums required appear daunting, but they are well within the realm of possibility. Through innovative mechanisms, rich countries can raise hundreds of billions of dollars in public finance each year, without breaking the bank.

From Copenhagen to Cancun (via Toronto)

The G8 and G20 should make progress on the 'Green Climate Fund' agreed in Copenhagen, and on their pledge to 'mobilize' \$100 billion a year by 2020. G8 and G20 have the opportunity in Canada to turn ambiguity into action by agreeing on a UN Green Fund that is fair, transparent, and accessible; and by bringing a package of climate financing for poor countries on stream.

Meeting their \$100 billion a year promise will not be easy but the G8 and G20 could adopt new and innovative sources of financing to raise the necessary revenue and ensure that governments do not raid existing and future aid budgets. These include a global financial transaction (or 'Robin Hood') tax on banks that could raise up to \$400 billion a year for health, education and climate change; emissions trading schemes for international aviation and shipping; and by using Special Drawing rights (SDRs) as capital, 'green bonds' could be issued, raising \$40 billion per year for clean energy investments in developing countries. Ending fossil fuel subsidies could also provide additional funding for investments in the resilience of poor and vulnerable communities around the world. Together, these sources are capable of delivering adequate resources to meet developing country needs for climate finance, which Oxfam estimates are \$200 billion a year in public financing – double the Copenhagen pledge.

The G8 must also make good on their stopgap pledge of \$30 billion of new and additional 'Fast Start Finance' over the period 2010 to 2012 to help developing countries cope with climate change. All indications are that this money will be repackaged aid promises, counted by rich countries towards their 0.7% ODA targets – money that otherwise could be spent on essential services such as health and education. G8 countries must demonstrate that their Fast-Start financing is indeed new and additional, and should set the tone for all rich countries by pledging not to take climate financing from the aid budget.

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Invest in the Future: Invest in Maternal Health

Every year, some 350,000 women die in pregnancy or childbirth. The four major killers are bleeding, infections, unsafe abortions and obstructed labor. The medical solutions to avoiding or managing these four major killers are well known. In most cases, basic health care intervention in the form of a trained midwife, with obstetric equipment and medicines, and a well-equipped referral hospital staffed by trained doctors will save the mother's life.

It is scandalous that pregnancy and childbirth are major causes of death in poor countries. The Millennium Development Goal to reduce maternal mortality by 75% before 2015 is achievable. The UN estimates the funding gap for maternal and child health at \$20 billion per year. The G8 should pledge to provide half that sum, \$10 billion annually in new money, and to spell out that it will address the discriminatory barriers that deny women quality healthcare.

Saving the lives of mothers will require more and better funding from governments and donor countries. It will mean repairing and strengthening public health systems as women need access to a variety of services at primary to tertiary level. It will mean investing in more health workers, especially midwives and obstetricians. It will mean making health services free and accessible. And it will mean making health services work for all.

Gender inequality lies at the heart of the problem. Pregnancy puts women at risk for many reasons, including a lifetime of poor nutrition and a lack of access to basic health care; HIV and AIDS, which in sub-Saharan Africa disproportionately affects women; and a lack of education, which leads to starting bigger families sooner. Girls aged 15-19 who marry young are twice as likely to die in childbirth as women aged 20-30. Women bear the greatest burden of user fees and their reproductive role means that they have the greatest need of health services, but in many societies their low status and lack of income mean they are last in line for medical care.

What Must be Done

Nearly one-third of maternal deaths could be avoided if women had access to family planning. A million dollars invested in family planning could avert 360,000 unwanted pregnancies, prevent 150,000 abortions and save the lives of 800 mothers and 11,000 infants. For a global initiative on maternal health to have lasting change, it will require more and better domestic and aid investment in public financing, delivery of free health care, a scale up in access to reproductive health and rights, including access to safe abortion, and measures to enhance gender equity.

Women must be empowered to make their own decisions on family size and spacing and whether they want to have children or to prevent pregnancy. Unfortunately, free access to information, the widest possible choice of contraception, and control over such decisions are not often a reality for most of the world's women.

Donor and developing countries together should prioritize removing user fees so that health care is free for all pregnant woman and children; **training, recruiting and retaining** the additional 4.25 million **health workers** needed worldwide (including the 700,000 midwives needed to ensure that at least 85% of pregnant women have access to skilled birth attendance); **ensuring a sustainable supply of affordable medicines** by facilitating the production and export of generic medicines; **and financing comprehensive reproductive health services.**

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Invest in the Future: Adopt a Financial Transaction Tax

Revenue raised from G20 taxation of the financial sector should help fight global poverty and climate change, because no one bailed out the millions of people who struggle to survive on a dollar or two a day. A small financial transaction tax has the best chance of raising the billions needed.

More than 64 million people were thrown into absolute poverty by the economic crisis. And this World Bank figure is in addition to pre-existing poverty levels.

African governments face a \$65 billion black hole in their budgets as a result of the economic crisis they did nothing to cause. Unless urgent action is taken, this is likely to lead to potentially life-threatening cuts in health-services, fewer school places and damage to economic development as governments are forced to cut back. The World Bank estimates that, by the end of 2010, 64 million more people will have been pushed into extreme poverty as a result of the economic crisis.

The poorest are suffering because of Wall Street's sins, and they are also on the front lines of climate change. At least \$100 billion a year is needed to help poor countries cope with climate change that is destroying the lives and livelihoods of millions in poor countries. Both German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicholas Sarkozy have acknowledged the role a financial transaction tax could play in tackling climate change.

Oxfam is calling for a tax on financial transactions averaging about 0.05% to raise at least \$400 billion annually. The funds raised by such a tax should be split equally between governments where the money is raised and global good causes. This is a win-win policy allowing G20 governments to tackle deficits at home while helping poor people abroad. Such investments can help build the resiliency of communities to adapt to climate change, create effective health care systems, ensure girls can attend school, and reduce hunger and food insecurity across the developing world. Yes, it is justice for the wrongs of the past, and it would help to prevent the crises of the future.

G20 and Taxing the Financial Sector

A leaked IMF report prepared for the G20 acknowledged that a financial transaction tax is technically feasible, but proposed a combination of a Financial Stability Contribution (also known as a bank levy) and a Financial Activities Tax (FAT). The FAT is an important acknowledgement that the financial sector taxes must go beyond covering the direct cost of bank bailouts to address the wider social and economic damage. When G20 Finance Ministers met in Busan, South Korea earlier this month they failed to reach agreement on a global tax, due in large part to the opposition of Canada. But with Germany, the US, France and the UK all committed to taxing financial services, the issue is likely to remain high on the G20 agenda. There is also significant support for an FTT with backing from the European Commission, France and Germany. The European Union is discussing plans for taxing banks with Michel Barnier, the EU internal markets commissioner, publicly supportive of an FTT.

There is support for an FTT. Oxfam's call for an FTT (popularized as a Robin Hood Tax in some countries) to tackle poverty and climate change is supported by a global coalition of campaigners in Canada, the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France and Australia amongst other countries. These coalitions include development agencies, green groups, faith organizations, charities, anti-poverty campaigners, and celebrities.

Actor Bill Nighy, who spearheaded the campaign in the UK, is at the G8 and G20 with Oxfam. Half a million people across the world have watched a short campaign film in which he stars. And more than 350 leading economists, including Joseph Stiglitz, Jeffrey Sachs, Dani Rodrik and Dean Baker support the global campaign for an FTT. Public opinion polls show strong support for a global tax on banks to pay for the broader costs of the economic crisis and tackle climate change.

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