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Enacting Policies to Change the World

Although the world is abounding with problems there remain a few that can and should be solved in this century. At the forefront lies world hunger. The idea seems a daunting task to tackle, but with proper and effective programs it is possible to make progress. World hunger is synonymous with poverty, rural subsistence living, and hopelessness. On the whole, the area of Africa is considered worst case scenario. It would be wildly ignorant to set aside the fact that Sub-Saharan Africa holds sixteen of the eighteen most undernourished countries (International Food Policy Research Institute). However it would be equally, if not more ignorant, to consider this the only place with a major hunger crisis. Raising awareness on the topic of world hunger has been brought about through policy proposals and major celebrity involvement in our country. This has merely been a tear in a river of tragic poverty though. The problem speaks for itself-world hunger-and therefore the problems needs to be more effectively addressed on an international basis. At the heart of solving this problem is the necessity of formulating public policies. These policies must target a number of things to insure global food security, economic stability, equality, education, and a more stable global community. In the last two decades certain foundations have made great strides. Two policy initiatives that have been formulated are the 2020 Vision and Green Revolution which have honed the ideas that are necessary to vanquish world hunger. The effects will be tremendous and by looking at how these two policies correspond with one another one can see that the greater impact will change the world of poverty forever. Many countries, including the great problem of Africa, are looking to benefit from the changing world under such policies. In this research there is a focus on the region of Papua New Guinea. It is different in some ways from the standard impoverished country, but is also holds the fundamental basis of that which is afflicting millions world wide. It remains in the hands of world wide government agencies to step up and help solve this problem.

One American dollar is capable of paying for one can of soup, a bagel, a bottle of water, even a doughnut. One dollar is incapable of providing a substantial lifestyle. The portions above are grossly inadequate to the demands of the human body. Today, in concentrated areas of poverty such as Africa, Asia, Tahiti, and Papua New Guinea, 92% of the population is living off of the equivalent of one American dollar or less each day (IFPRI). Fully one half of the human race lives off of the equivalent of two American dollars a day (IFPRI). Finally, the incomes of the riches 1% of humanity are equivalent to the poorest 57% (IFPRI)! Millions are going through the motions of the day on a virtually empty stomach because to live a healthy life one must have food. To buy food one must have money. If one has not been educated on how to properly attain money then he may struggle to survive. Without the proper funds workers cannot be paid for the hard labor that they attend to on a daily basis. There are no policies in place that even give farmers benefits for the crops that they raise. Government agencies and world leaders need desperately to focus in on this very obvious problem. We now have technology conducive to turning world hunger around. New technologies geared toward increasing crop yields have been tested, proven, and even approved (West Africa Rice Development Association). In Africa a hybrid rice is being grown that is more compatible with the stressful ecology of Africa (WARDA). The government okay is a must for proper implementation. The past is not empty of the trials and errors addressing this issue. World leaders have brought it up at conventions, national and international, for many years. It often takes the back burner to issues such as war and trade. Although it is considered an important issue the responsibility is handed over to philanthropic agencies. Though their help and influence are great they lack the government

authority to implement. Other notable efforts have arisen amongst celebrities who also have the money and influence to make a difference, but also lack the ability to yield a long term change. The solution is obvious. Policies must be made and governments must accept. People have become increasingly aware. It is high time for government action. The small things that the government can do could have a large impact on the world of poverty.

The world is not completely without the initiatives to produce a solution. One major attempt at unraveling the issue has been dubbed the Green Revolution. This program's original goal was increasing the yield per acre of corn and beans in Mexico (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation). The research began in a center in Mexico City. The program began as a combination of philanthropy, research, recruitment of scientists and farmers of the developing world, and government agriculture and water policy (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation). The center was almost wholly managed, staffed, and funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. The foundation believed it important to have scientists and farmers from the area that was looking to implement this program so the people knew what they were dealing with first hand. As populations increase so do overall demands. This program addressed the problems and educated the farmers that would need to fully immerse themselves in this new plan in order for the program's trial to be a success. Although it was successful in Latin America and Asia the effects were incapable of being universal (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation). Perhaps the place that would have really benefited from the effects was Africa, but due to the diversity of the climate, soil types, and suitable crops it was not quite so easy (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation). Nature seemed hard pressed to allow in that which might help the country and therefore the effects were minimal. That is not to say that efforts were not made to suit this climate. Nature cannot be controlled, but if taken in the proper perspective what is there can be managed. Hope was not lost for this area. A program aptly named New Rice for Africa, or Nerica, has since benefited food supplies and farm incomes. In short this "new rice" has a shorter growth cycle as well as a greater resistance to weeds (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation). Aside from the obvious benefits, this program has allowed children to be out of the fields more which enables them to attend school. This is crucial because knowledge is surely power. It is the power to help, to teach, and the power to change.

Another revolutionary idea is called the 2020 vision. Some of the goals are similar to the Green Revolution, but it more thoroughly goes through how to achieve all of the goals of the program. This is a vision of hope that has a stable ideology that could become the next phase of a changing global community. The efforts are surrounded by the necessity for pro-poor economic growth policies. There are seven specific initiatives that must be enacted as policies to lock down success. These encompass the government, resources, productivity, and financial needs. They are as follows:

- 1- Investing in human resources includes educating poor societies, universal healthcare, and clean water and sanitation (International...). Knowledge is an untapped resource in all poverty ridden areas of the world. By educating the millions that are not educated the world is looking at a more well-rounded international community. The global progress that could emerge from this could lead to faster technology advances faster, peace initiatives, diversity, and acceptance of all races. Educating women will open doors to better family sizes, better child care practices, long term child nutrition, and a more realistic income for families (International...). This is crucial because the children are the future of all countries. Properly caring for and educating them lies with their families, and due to traditions, mainly with the mother. Birth spacing and family sizes are particularly important because our world is currently facing a population crisis. This is one way to address that problem as well as directly dealing with world hunger. Along with a healthy family is the idea of universal healthcare. This is also important to the development of these countries because the jobs citizens hold or will hold not be able to start them off with the benefit of health insurance. Spending will begin at the level of investing in the development of

infrastructure, and creating new jobs. Also, universal healthcare will be able to provide for those who choose not to take jobs outside of the fields. It remains important that all health issues can be addressed by proper doctors in order for the country to continue thriving.

2- Improving access to productive resources and remunerative employment. In order to create a purpose alongside societal and international well-being there must be access to greater resources that will lead to profit. Money drives the world and production drives profit. They go hand-in-hand and are established through a solid work ethic, which is a product of education. All of these ideas connect to one another that one policy is able to effectively cover many, if not all, areas. It is a way to make changes but not so much that people are unwilling to comply. One of the first things that must be decreed are small-scale, non-agricultural enterprises (International...). The mass reliance on agriculture to supply a substantial family lifestyle is wildly unrealistic. Citizens are often unable to grow enough crops on a regular basis to provide a proper subsistence life for their entire family, let alone produce a surplus to sell (International...). If they do have a surplus people in these impoverished communities are incapable of selling their agricultural goods to make a consistent income because the others in the same boat are unable to buy the goods. There is not money to purchase these goods. This fact alone is one of the main reasons that subsistence living exists. By creating jobs outside of agriculture new doors to profit are open. Factories that provide proper jobs, and realistic incomes and benefits would have a great impact on such areas because so many can be employed by them.

3- Improving markets, infrastructure, and institutions. In this area infrastructure must first be given attention. Without a solid foundation no policy will last long. There must be goals to reach, people must understand what needs to be done to maintain a better society, and the economy needs to be uplifted. This means better markets that are a part of the mainstream competition (International...). Everyone must be factored in. When something such as new jobs are brought about in areas unfamiliar with them there is a mass need for immediate education. This is such a diverse range of citizens that should be able to provide for their families. It is important for a solid belief in the new system and a continuing work ethic. Therefore rural regions must receive investments in infrastructure. They are often the last regions to receive such investments and, on the whole, this could have a negative effect on a new system. These people must also be recognized in order for complete success. Standing markets and institutions, especially the agricultural market, must be reformed in order for farmers to make a living off of what they know how to do best. Furthermore this market must have policies in place for benefits and a guaranteed, set wage so that individuals can provide for their family.

4- Expanding appropriate research, knowledge, and technology. This will correspond closely with improving markets and infrastructure. By developing research in biological sciences, energy, and communication information, new opportunities will inevitably spring up in the majority of areas that need it (International...). As stated above, new opportunities and jobs in a variety of areas will allow for widespread food security.

5- Improving natural resource management often seems to be overlooked. It is, however, a fact that poverty arises with environmental degradation because crops are less capable of growing with the missing essentials (International...). There needs to be reform in place to ensure sanitary water is available to all. This will solve many health crises that arise from polluted water that is being consumed. Fertile soil is also something that needs to be available on a broad range. This will open the door to better crops that are growing at a more consistent rate every growing season. Also, if areas of fertile soil were marked, or set aside for farming it would be more productive for the country as a whole. These two issues, sanitary water and fertile soil, are critical in the creation of new policies. They must not be overlooked, but rather taken seriously and properly factored into new policies.

6- Good governances seem to be the missing link in a faulty policy or in areas where the law is not being fully executed. So much power to change lies within the governing body, but at every turn a thousand things can go wrong. First and foremost the law must be firmly, and with minimal

loop holes, lain down (International...). There must be no question on authority and who holds it. Corruption must be vanquished because with corruption follows the demise of hope. This hope is a driving force in making a new system successful. If the government does not prove itself to the citizens it is governing there will be no belief in change, stagnancy will set in. There must be a sound public administration ready and willing to protect human rights. Discrimination against women or other races must be eliminated so unnecessary conflict does not arise. Many of these ideas have been taken on by NGO's, businesses, and philanthropic associations. These groups, however, do not have the power to declare peace, enforce laws, or enact public policies (International...). It is up to the governments to want, and to make, all of the necessary changes.

7- Pro-poor national and international trade and macroeconomic policies. Macroeconomic stability must be achieved because if the country is without it, agricultural reform will be ineffective (International...). The developing countries must take part in the current round of agricultural trade negotiations in order to pursue better access to industrialized country's markets (International...). This will begin the process of reducing and ending trade distorting agricultural subsidies created by industrialized countries (International...). Also international financial agencies such as the World Bank must help those that are highly indebted. Creating policies is important but the financial aspect always sits to the left of bettering daunting situations, which is world hunger in this case. The financial factor envelops stabilizing the developing global communities. This includes funding research, creating jobs, providing healthcare, ensuring education, and the list goes on. Money drives all major global endeavors and solving world hunger is no different. It will make or break new policies and this vision, that in itself must be clearly recognized and understood.

This vision is possibly one of the most fool proof ways to achieve global food security. It is truly capable of vanquishing world hunger. The effects it may have on the broad scale are tremendous. It is also important to acknowledge how wonderful it is on a small-scale community. Zoning in on the effects, area by area, will show that eventually developing countries will become the building blocks of an even better world.

Papua New Guinea is not the average developing country. The problem does not merely lie with civil discords or lack of income, but there is a continuous decline of human development (FAO, "Papua...") This problem is a direct product of the fact that citizens lack the cash to buy basic goods (FAO, "Papua..."). Also the country itself does not have the monetary stability needed to pay the people that are earning it (FAO, "Papua..."). This leads to a mass shortage of basic healthcare, safe water, and scant resources for education. This means that a generic common cold does not even receive cough syrup and can easily turn into full blown streptococcus, influenza, or pneumonia. Although the cold is a virus there is also a lack of awareness of how to deal with even the most simple illnesses. What is often taken for granted in the United States is nearly nonexistent in these countries and major problems materialize. Safe water supplies are limited which leads to illness. Even petty matters such as cuts or open wounds cannot be effectively cleaned out with water that has exponential amounts of bacteria in it. Twenty-five percent of the population lives in poverty and this populace consists of small holder farmers, artisan fishers, subsistence farmers in the outer islands, and women. Subsistence farming is the fundamental means of survival. 85% of the population live off of such a livelihood (CIA). It is a hard lifestyle that the environment does not always cater to. The inherent problems of droughts, pests, and too much rain (though rare) aside, there remain the basics of growing. There are regions of low soil suitability, areas of steep slopes and mountains, and areas of low to medium climatic production potential (CIA). The center ridge of the area is savannah, but the rest is dominantly evergreen forest (FAO, "Papua..."). Sixty percent of the land is arable, though these are not concentrated areas but rather scattered (FAO, "Papua..."). Due to the rugged terrain and high cost of developing infrastructure there is low exploitation (CIA). Two thirds of the

export earnings come from the mineral deposits of copper, gold, and oil. Other exports and products farmed include coffee, cocoa, copra, palm kernels, tea, sugar, rubber, and et cetera (CIA). The help needed to make something resembling a living is immense. All hands of a household are used which means little education. There are 2,600 community schools for grades one to six, 120 provincial schools for grades seven to ten, and four national high schools which are the only schools that offer grades eleven and twelve full time(CIA). There are some schools of distance education and limited private institutions(CIA). The facts speak for themselves, as children get older education takes the back burner. After all, where will they use their knowledge? The fields do not require workers to know of the Second World War or basic Algebra. This mindset must stop. This is where the Green Revolution and 2020 Vision come in. With strong policies and positive government action developing country, and all developing countries, will be able to become more stable. The Green Revolution has proven that crops can be made more suitable for different regions, reforming the overall yield and providing better results for the country as a whole. Subsistence livelihoods will turn into careers for those who still want to work in the area of agriculture. Crops will be a means of income instead of a thin thread of hope for a semblance of a healthy life. The 2020 vision will spark up policies essential to providing educations, banishing discrimination, and creating an infrastructure for a more stable society. With positive, powerful leaders this world problem can be helped and solved.

On paper it may sound slightly simple, but enacting policies, increasing research, developing infrastructure, balancing government power with the needs of the people, and devising funding for global well being will take time and baby steps. It cannot be done in a day, a year, or even a decade. It can be done though. It is far from impossible and the fact that policy ideas have been formed to address world hunger shows a compassion for humanity that was nonexistent as little as 70 years ago, which is a short amount of time in a crisis such as this. It is important to recognize the need to begin forming many policies to change the way the world is now. The overwhelming gratitude that will be felt by all impoverished areas will be more than enough payment, but the way our world will become a unified body of difference is also extraordinary. These policies have the potential to establish trust between nations in places that need to learn trust. We, as a world, can show those in need the compassion that we have so that they know that as they struggle, we fight to help them. Papua New Guinea is just one of the hundreds of societies that deals with extreme poverty. It is a society that wants to trust the world with its struggles, and a society that could only change for the better. It is an issue that is capable of being solved and now is the time to make a permanent change.

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