WN *The issue*

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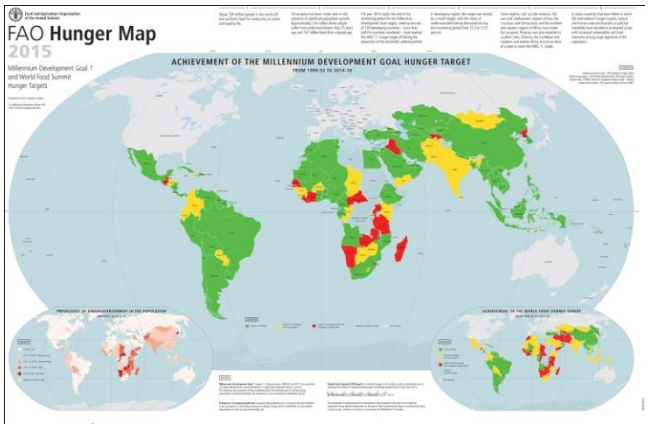
Inspiration
Knowledge – and decision and action

Contributors to WN in this double issue include (top) Thomas Pogge, Ashok Bhurtyal, Dushala Adhikari, Fred Kummerow, Steve Case, José Graziano da Silva, Yoni Freedhoff, George Kent; (middle) Geoffrey Cannon, Martin Blaser, Tim Spector, Mark Wahlqvist, Claudio Schuftan, Henry Kamm, Tu Giay, Pope Francis; (bottom) Aruna Uprety, David Raubenheimer, Claus Leitzmann, Sara Garduño-Diaz, Maria Alvim, Hetty Einzig, Umesh Kapil, Neha Sareen

The Issue team reports: Our guest editorial (page 555) is by Thomas Pogge. In *Update* (starting on page 558) Ashok Bhurtyal, Dushala Adhikari and colleagues on Langtang, Fred Kummerow on achieving the US ban on *trans* fats, Steve Case on great meals, José Graziano da Silva on great diets, Yoni Freedhoff on obesity in Canada, and George Kent's *Vision*. Then (middle row) Geoffrey Cannon with Martin Blaser and Tim Spector on how antibiotics make you fat (page 589); Mark Wahlqvist on Tu Giay, with Henry Kamm, Claudio Schuftan and Tu Giay himself (page 613); and Pope Francis on a righteous world future (page 623). Then (bottom row) a 25 page *Feedback* section (starting on page 636) with Aruna Uprety on junk food aid, David Raubenheimer, Claus Leitzmann and Sara Garduno-Diaz on shaping nutrition science, Maria Alvim on what (some) students eat, Hetty Einzig on Eduardo Galeano, and Umesh Kapil and Neha Sareen on why vitamin A supplements are dangerous. And other contributions by our editorial teams.

***WN** Development*

Hunger is grossly underestimated



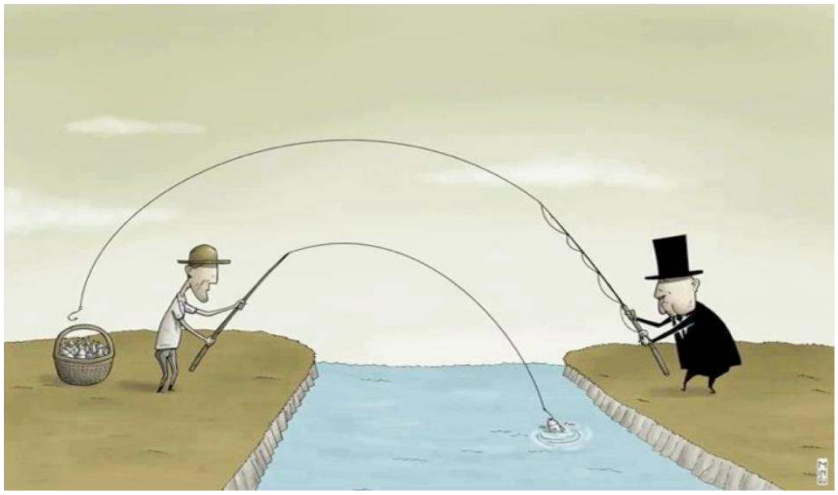
Annual calculations of food insecurity, undernutrition and hunger in the world made by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization are gross underestimates and as presented are falsely optimistic

Thomas Pogge writes: The UN Food and Agriculture's methodology vastly understates the number of chronically undernourished populations and people. This produces a much-too-rosy trend picture. And this is not an isolated case. There have been various other changes in definitions and measurement methods associated with other MDG targets which have also resulted in rosier trend-lines. We must not allow the poor to be so dramatically betrayed. Chronic undernourishment is likely to be vastly more common and persistent than the FAO statistics claim. There needs to be an independent group of experts producing estimates that can be trusted. It is our responsibility as world citizens to relieve the FAO's dreadful conflict of interest, and our professional duty to develop reliable estimates, even if governments jealously defend their data monopoly. Academics and other qualified colleagues can do this job. We should join forces to do so.

Access Thomas Pogge on world food insecurity, undernutrition and hunger here

WN *Development*

George Kent's vision



This cartoon from the editorial page of a newspaper in the Philippines responds to an article George Kent has written, in which he shows the reality, which is that the rich are fed by the poor

George Kent writes: Like most people who read the literature on these topics, I got the idea that well-being, health and disease were mainly technical problems. And I got the impression that the problems are mainly due to deficiencies in the supply of things such as food, land, water, doctors, knowledge, or whatever. What was missing was supplies and also 'interventions' by smart people.

However, after studying the issues intensely, I found no good reason for widespread child malnutrition and mortality. I came to realise that there is not one child who is born into a poor world. Viewed globally, there is plenty of land, water, and sunshine. The main deficiency that matters is the deficiency of caring.

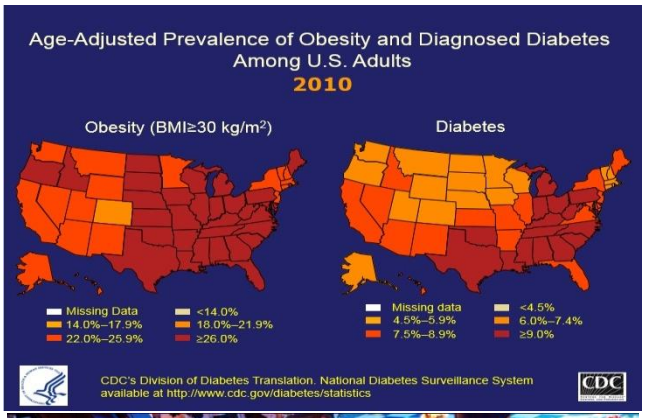
What mainly determines states of illness, health or well-being, is the degree to which people care about one another. There is hunger in the world mainly because of widespread exploitation under which many people are not able to fully enjoy the fruits of their own labour. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that in market-based food systems, locally, nationally, and globally, the poor feed the rich. Food flows toward money, not need. Students of the hunger problem often encourage more charitable giving to the poor, but a better answer is to take less from them.

My hope is that we give more attention to how people can live together well at the local level, in strong communities. When we all find excellent ways to live together we will be solving the hunger problem, from the bottom.

Access George Kent's Vision here

WN *Project Phoenix*

Conventional nutrition is burned out



Cnventional nutrition is impotent in the face of pandemic obesity and diabetes (top), complacent as witness conference gala dinners (middle) and seeks income from Big Food, such as Coca-Cola (below)

The Project Phoenix team writes: This issue of *WN* completes the seven indictments (not judgements) indicating that modern conventional nutrition is burned out. In our next issue we become positive, and begin to outline a whole new philosophy with principles for nutrition as a whole, fit to face the facts of this century.

WN *Hot stuff. Antibiotics*

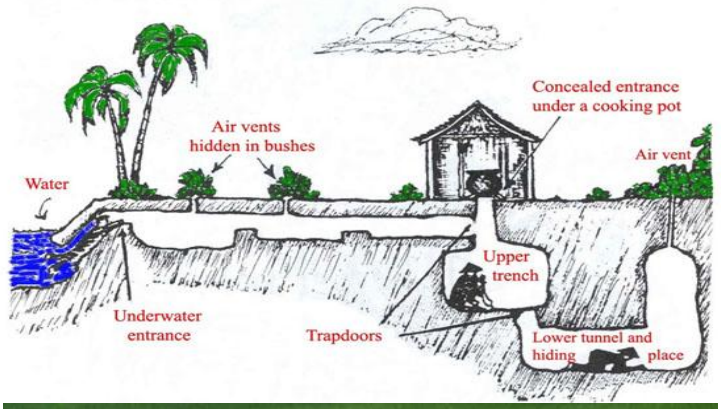
Weapons of mass destruction

In their 'golden age' earlier last century antibiotics were thought to cure and do no harm. Now, rates of disease and death caused by drug-resistant bacteria are rising rapidly and are out of control

Geoffrey Cannon writes: In this issue I report on game-changing research including that being done in the US and the UK by teams led by Martin Blaser and Tim Spector. Once it was supposed that the only good bacteria were dead bacteria. Now by contrast it is well-known that humans are co-evolved with bacteria, billions of which cover all outside and inside body surfaces, which in the gut are crucial for the metabolism of food and which normally should be harmless or protective. The notion that antibacterial drugs are 'magic bullets' that cure diseases and do no harm is a fantasy. In fact they are weapons of mass destruction of gut microbiota, causing 'superinfection' with foreign bacteria, and breeding 'superbugs' that resist treatment. But this is not all. It is now evident that antibiotics are a cause of obesity.

Nutrition. Tu Giay

The nutritionist victor of the Vietnam war



Tu Giay congratulated by Ho Chi Minh in the war zone (top), for his nourishment of the army of liberation (middle). After the war his national plan included breeding fish in rice paddies (bottom).

Mark Wahlqvist writes: I was privileged to meet the Vietnamese agronomist and nutritionist Tu Giay, after the Vietnam war was ended. In this issue of *WN* I tell how as attested by General Giap, he played a crucial role in winning the war.

Access Mark Wahlqvist on Tu Giay here

***WN** Nourishment*

Fasting and feasting are normal

Teaching and practice of dietetics and nutrition now assumes that three meals a day are normal, or should be. There is however good reason to believe that humans are evolved to fast and feast

Geoffrey Cannon writes: In this issue I tell of my adventures with the Daniel Fast, which is mostly raw vegan (middle picture). After time out for meditation, I conclude that humans are evolved and adapted not to eat three meals a day (see top picture) but as well as eating everyday meals – one to three a day – to alternate some form of fasting, with the occasional feast (as enjoyed by Michael Pollan and friends (bottom picture) when food is plentiful. The implications are awesome.

Access Geoffrey Cannon on fasting and feasting here