

Faced with a food and energy crisis, how can society improve its well-being?

SUMMARY:

With the world's economic and social landscape changing constantly, food and energy, more specifically the lack of it are being thrust into the fore the international stage. Societies all over the world are faced with a pending and ongoing crisis. Global populations have reached over 6.5 billion people. This staggering amount is expected to reach over 9 billion by 2040. This staggering growth coincides, almost in direct correlation you can say, with the shortages of food and energy available. With ardent and constant monitoring and a vigilant take on the crisis, the social well being of societies internationally could be improved. However a failure to do so would not only call into question the governing bodies' integrities but more importantly the effect on the populace would be dire.

The problem with the crisis faced is difficult to comprehend. The reason behind this is that the severity is evident at different levels; more obvious in some areas than others. As a result the global view on this is warped. As always with disagreements the arrival towards a solution is further distanced. Developing countries like China are seeing their general public come into more money and so a better lifestyle, reflected by their larger usage of energy and food. This extra energy and food consumption causes a debt to the global reserve and thus less food at any one time is available to feed a growing world. This is added to by the depletion and exhaustion of fertile farmland, done so to feed more mouths and the felling of forests done so to make way for housing. The strain is increasing with every passing day. The higher demand forces the prices of such commodities to rise and this is happening whilst the average buying power globally is either stagnant or decreasing. This was a worrying prospect 20 years ago but now it is a reality the global economic meltdown a result of this.

The crisis is at different levels in different countries and this means that it has to be dealt with in different ways. In the developing countries where the industries are more primarily based the emphasis should be on subsistence farming. Too much land is being wasted for cash crops. As a result the food does not find its way to those who need it, its own people. By increasing reliance on the subsistence the country has a solid base upon which to build and less money will be spent on needless imports and thus less money will be borrowed to fund this. As a result more money could be made available to fund energy projects. This idea is more likely to work as the country is still growing and so new systems are easier to implement also subsistence is already apart of the culture though only to a certain extent. This is hinged on the assumption that the countries' existing debts are either cancelled or lowered. This is pivotal to the societies' of the poorer countries as without the reduction or cancellation of the national debts they are unable to develop this new system and improve their well being at this time of crisis. But more important is when this happens, with the poorer countries this change needs to be implemented now as they will be facing the most severe end of the crisis.

This idea can only work to a certain extent in the wealthier countries where the systems are long implemented and societal behaviour is stubborn to change. For it to work here it has to be expanded. The dependence on imports should be reduced. With more food being imported money is taken out of the country and so the food prices increase, also this increases the amount of energy that is being used and so reducing this will help two fold. The main way to help in these countries is the need for change in society behaviour. This has been tackled by governments i.e. advertising campaigns, incentives to businesses to back this energy curb, and laws being passed. However although this is very helpful to in improving the well being the risk is that during this economic recession the increase in food and energy will rise no matter what is

happening due to a stagnant economic growth. So to counter this government should keep actively tackling this by lowering prices of food and having financial support for those who cannot afford the bills thus allowing people to change their lifestyles to a more efficient way of living but doing so in a slow change so society can accept the change.

For both poorer and wealthier countries there should be a bigger emphasis on birth control and medical care and better education to support this. By doing this they would help curb global population growth and thus attacking the main reason globally to this developing crisis.

To achieve the goal of improving the wellbeing of the global societies more effort must be made in changing the global view and behaviour and its attitude to this crisis. More of the funding which, strained as it is, needs to be put into reducing global debts and implementing new methods of tackling this crisis. We are at the point where something must be done no more excuses otherwise the future for our children and their children is one not worth living towards.