

AFRICA ACTION SHEET



Winter 2016-2017

North East Nigeria's forgotten hunger crisis

Since the Boko Haram insurgency began, more people have migrated to the town of Monguno alone than left Africa for Europe in the first nine months of this year. Across the region, the war against Boko Haram has forced 2.6 million people from their homes, part of a wider trend across Africa. Of the world's 17 million displaced Africans, 93.7% remain inside the continent, and just 3.3% have reached Europe, according to UN data.



Borno has suffered from seven years of brutal insurgency, finally hitting the global headlines two years ago following the abduction of hundreds of girls from a school in Chibok, Borno.

The impact of this conflict on Nigeria's children is horrific – they are being killed and maimed, forced to fight a war that is not of their making, and witnessing unimaginable acts of violence. And children are not just losing their lives in active conflict – they are dying from hunger and disease, lack of food, water and basic healthcare.

Hundreds of children's graves have been discovered in parts of Borno which have recently become accessible following advances made by the Nigerian armed forces. The UN has reported that 400,000 children are acutely malnourished – which is life-threatening without treatment. Read more:

Save the Children "Latest Blogs" www.savethechildren.org.uk and www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/25

TOBIN TAX MAKES A COME-BACK!

Governments worldwide have from time to time imposed a nominal tax on trading to raise revenue and/or to discourage excessive speculation. Sometimes called a **Tobin Tax** after Nobel Laureate economist James Tobin, but more commonly referred to today as a **Financial Transaction Tax (FTT)**, it is currently levied in a number of markets, and support for it is growing in many European capitals. In our increasingly technology driven financial system, dominated more and more by speculative forces, the arguments in favour of an FTT are now stronger than ever. All 28 EU finance ministers will be presented with a "fact-finding report" and updated on the levy's progress, in December. Read more: <http://capitalinstitute.org>

Advent is a journey towards Bethlehem. May we let ourselves be drawn by the light of God made man. Pope Francis



The Africa Action Sheet is produced by the

AFRICA-EUROPE FAITH & JUSTICE NETWORK-UK

2 Park Place Devizes Wilts SN10 1PJ

0778 707 8833

aefjnuk@yahoo.co.uk

www.aefjn.org.uk

Film: "Seeds of Sovereignty"

As the world's agriculture and food systems face a crisis of disappearing seed diversity, a new short film tells the story of how African farming communities and organisations are reviving traditional seed diversity across the continent, and resisting mounting corporate pressure to use industrialised seed and farming methods.

Download the film from the

Gaia Foundation

www.gaiafoundation.org

AFRICA'S DEBT CRISIS: THE UK'S ROLE

A new debt crisis has begun in impoverished countries, with **Mozambique** and **Ghana** unable to pay debts. Unless action is taken the crisis could cause increasing poverty and declining public service provision, as happened in the 1980s and 1990s.

The crisis comes from a boom in lending and borrowing since the global financial crisis in 2008, followed by the crash in the price of commodity exports on which African countries depend.

Structural changes are needed to the global economy to prevent the cycle of crises, including better regulation of lenders, tax justice and enabling countries to be less dependent on commodity exports.

But the **UK** needs to take responsibility now for the large amount of debt contracted under English law. **Jubilee Debt Campaign** is calling for a change in **UK law** so that all private loans to governments must be publicly disclosed and **vulture funds** cannot hold countries to ransom in British courts.



Vulture Funds are held by financial speculators looking to profiteer from countries in debt crisis. From Argentina to Zambia, they have swooped in to buy up debts for pennies in the pound and then demanded full payment plus interest from the original country.

Email: info@jubileedebt.org.uk or phone **020 7324 4722**
and ask for booklets on: *African countries at risk*
and *UK debt law MP* postcards

Uganda Farmers win their case against land grabbing company

The farmers provided evidence that Bidco, a Kenya-based company, approved by the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** engaged in human rights, labour and environmental violations on Bugala Island, Lake Victoria, where the company had grabbed land from local farmers and cut down 18,000 acres of rainforest to make way for a large-scale palm oil business.

The UN investigators conceded that "Communities should be empowered and not be trodden upon by predator corporations like Bidco."

Read more: www.farmlandgrab.org



GOOD NEWS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

TAX INSPECTORS WITHOUT BORDERS RECOVER LOST REVENUE

More than **\$260m in tax revenues** has been generated through the **Tax Inspectors Without Borders (TIWB)** initiative since its launch in July last year, the **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** announced on November 22.

The TIWB project was launched in July 2015 to support developing nations address base erosion and profit shifting. It provides support and training from highly qualified tax experts, in particular to support audits of multinationals' affairs.

According to the OECD, eight pilot projects – in countries spanning the globe from Africa to Asia and Latin America – have resulted in more than \$260m in additional tax revenues to date. This includes more than **\$100m in new tax revenues** generated through TIWB audits in **Zimbabwe**, which the OECD said demonstrates the tremendous potential for future projects.

Thirteen projects are underway worldwide, in Botswana, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Jamaica, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. A range of new programmes will be launched in the coming year, including new deployments of auditors to Republic of Congo, Egypt, Uganda, Cameroon, and Vietnam. This will also include the first South-South co-operation project under the TIWB initiative, which will see **Kenyan auditors** deployed to **Botswana** in 2017, the OECD said.

"Developing countries face serious challenges in raising domestic resources to fund basic government services, and tax avoidance by multinational enterprises is a complicating factor. The TIWB programme is demonstrating how effective capacity building can make a difference toward the goal of ensuring that all companies pay their fair share of tax."

Read more: **Tax-News** www.tax-news.com