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News Worth Knowing

Daily Brief 17.07.2019

“Hunger is on the rise in almost all subregions of Africa.” This is according to the [latest UN data on global food security](#). The number of hungry people on the continent has risen by 17.5% since 2015 to 256m, 31% of the global total. According to the report this trend could shave 11% off the continent’s GDP.

The numbers are part of an increasingly worrying outlook for food security across the continent, despite years of rhetoric about an agricultural revolution.

Incidents of hunger are on the up across Africa, driven by a mix of conflict, climate change, and underinvestment.

Despite a 2003 pledge by governments to allocate 10% of budget spending to agriculture, the share actually fell from 3.66% in 2001 to 2.30% (2017). Private sector investment remains insufficient due to various issues including poor regulation/policy, access to finance, and infrastructure.

In other words, expect more of the same.

Despite this the topic of hunger gets little airtime in the never-ending procession of conferences and dedicated to driving development - and food security - on the continent. On the contrary, it’s largely absent from discourse.

Understandable, as hunger invokes the worst clichés about underdevelopment and poverty in Africa.

But given its dire consequences for social and economic development, this is a mistake.

Today's picks

From the continent

Egypt plans to invest up to \$55bn in the next 15 into its expansion of the Suez Canal, one

of a series of 'Mega Projects' under president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi aimed at driving growth and investment. The first phase of the expansion was launched in 2015. **More:** [CGTN](#)

Public workers in Zimbabwe have threatened strike action unless the government agrees to a new minimum monthly wage of \$475, amid soaring inflation, which hit 175.66% in June. The government is already under pressure to cut public spending as Zimbabwe experiences its worst economic crisis in a decade. **More:** [Reuters](#)

The Daily Stat

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The number of people linked to Kenya's booming gambling industry being deported by authorities, part of efforts to more tightly regulate the sector. **More:** [BBC](#)

The Global Perspective

Sub-Saharan Africa will add more than 160m unique mobile subscribers by 2025, to a total of 623m, according to new data from the GSMA, driven by young users. This makes the region the world's fastest-growing for mobile adoption. **More:** [GSMA](#)

French pay-TV group Canal+ has acquired Nigeria-based television studio ROK, the first international acquisition in the country's popular film industry - known as Nollywood. The investment is part of growing interest in Africa's fast-growing pay-TV space. **More:** [Independent Online](#)
