Since 2007, three factors have increasingly undermined food security around the world: firstly, a surge in demand for food in developing nations, and the expectation that sustained population growth will not lessen this demand in future; secondly, a boom in biofuels, requiring that traditional crops be replaced by those which generate energy; and thirdly, the ever-apparent effects of climate change. With this combination of negative influences conspiring to inflate prices, food security has been pushed toward the top of the international agenda.

At a time when many countries are diversifying their means of promoting national economic development, the facts show that growth in the agricultural sector yields more than twice the benefits in poverty alleviation than are yielded by the growth of other sectors.

As a consequence, and in the wake of recent food shortages, increasing attention has been paid to restoring the position of agriculture as a primary catalyst of economic growth.