

Gilman Foreign Policy in Focus: Global Food Security Virtual Seminar Series

Seminar 1: Current State of Global Food Security



Heidi Manley

Chief, USA Study Abroad, U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs

Heidi Manley is the Chief of USA Study Abroad, part of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), serving as the lead for American student mobility within the State Department. She oversees two of the Department's leading programs to support American students, the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program and the Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program, which she launched in 2006. Heidi also has the lead for creating and overseeing a number of capacity-building initiatives to increase and diversify American student mobility, including the Capacity Building Program for U.S. Study Abroad for accredited U.S. higher education institutions, also known as the IDEAS Program, and Study Abroad Engagement Grants for U.S. Embassies and Fulbright Commissions worldwide. Heidi previously served as the Deputy Director of the Office of Global Educational Programs and in the Office of Academic Exchange Programs, where she worked on a number of initiatives under the Fulbright Program.



Noel Habashy

Assistant Teaching Professor of International Agriculture at The Pennsylvania State University

Noel Habashy is an Assistant Teaching Professor of International Agriculture at The Pennsylvania State University. His teaching and research focuses on global food security, international development, Global South-Global North partnerships, and global learning. He has lived in five countries and worked in or travelled to over 30 others during his 15-year career in international development, international education, and higher education. He holds a Ph.D. from The Pennsylvania State University in International Agriculture & Development and Agricultural Extension & Education.





Paul Maina

Founder and Director, Children and Youth Empowerment Center (CYEC)

Paul Maina is the founder and director of the Children and Youth Empowerment Centre (CYEC) in Nyeri, Kenya. The CYEC was initiated as a project of the national program for street dwelling persons, with Paul's mandate being to develop a replicable model to address the challenges of standards of service provision, projects' sustainability and program exit strategies. Paul has over 20 years' work experience in the MSME sector and in children and youth development services. Paul was the 2012 Michael C. Holen Leader in Residence award winner at the Staley School of Leadership Studies at Kansas State University, and is a facilitator of the Mandela Washington Fellowship for the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). Paul holds BA and PPE degrees from the University of Nairobi and Oxford University respectively and is a Rhodes Scholar for Kenya at Oxford.



Aaron Schwoebel

Food Policy and Security Section Head, U.S. Department of State's Office of Agricultural Policy

Aaron Schwoebel is a career Foreign Service Officer for the Department of State since 2002, currently serving as the Food Policy and Security Section Head in the Office of Agricultural Policy. His office supports U.S. foreign policy objectives by developing strategies and solutions that enable nearly \$200B in agricultural exports, millions of U.S. jobs, a sustainable agricultural landscape, and science-based approaches to innovation. Through collaboration with government agencies, the private sector and international partners, they ensure a level playing field for U.S. agriculture producers and consumers, while empowering innovation and reducing food insecurity globally. From 2020 to 2023 he was Chief of the Political and Economic Section at the U.S. Consulate General in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, focused on expanding opportunities for U.S. businesses in the Middle East's commercial capital. Mr. Schwoebel was in the Political Section of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq during the eventful 2019-2020 year, leading the Embassy's efforts to combat malign Iranian influence. From 2017 to 2019 he was Political Team Lead in the Office of Pakistan Affairs in Washington. Earlier in his career he served overseas in Montenegro, Slovakia, Morocco, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia. At various times he has tested as fluent in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian/Montenegrin, Modern Standard Arabic, and Slovak. Mr. Schwoebel obtained a B.A. in Political Science and Religious Studies from Albion College (Michigan), and an M.A. in Government from the University of Texas in Austin. He is married with three children and identifies as a Michigan native.

