

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - With 1 in 5 of the world's people deprived of electricity, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is calling for universal access to power by 2030. Anything less could impede global economic growth, Mr. Ban said as he also emphasized the need for a "clean-energy revolution" to double the use of renewable energy sources over the next 20 years.

WOMEN & GIRL - Adolescent girls, often undervalued in their societies, are bearing much of the burden in keeping fed not only their families, but their communities, according to a report released by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs. The erratic spikes in food prices worldwide have refocused attention on agriculture, development of which the report says is increasingly dependent on women, who are in need of better education, safety and health services.

AFRICA

DR CONGO has the capacity to become the driving force of Africa's economic development if its vast forests, water resources and trillions of dollars worth of mineral reserves are used prudently, according to the findings of a United Nations assessment released today.

GUINEA/MAURITANIA - The law does not necessarily make much difference when it comes to child labour: In Guinea and Mauritania the worst forms of child labour persist despite it being banned by law, leading child protection experts to call for a better understanding of the dynamics behind it.

ASIA

BANGLADESH - Contamination of deep groundwater with arsenic from shallower sources may not be as serious as feared — if pumping deep water is limited to domestic use, a study has found.

PAKISTAN - More than 30 cities in seven provinces across Pakistan have joined a United-Nations-led disaster preparedness campaign intended to make urban areas resilient and ready to cope with catastrophic events to reduce losses and damage.

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

ARGENTINA - Efforts by the government and thousands of volunteers in Argentina have succeeded in slashing the illiteracy rate to just 1.9 percent, with a goal to eliminate it completely within the next four years.

CUBA - Excluded from the 2010 Human Development Index, Cuba will issue a report of its own, which will reflect the impact of an economic crisis that has lasted for 20-plus years, and will show social and health indicators typical of the developed world. This decision, which has the support of the Human Development Report (HDR) Office of the United Nations Development Programme, is one of the results of a process of dialogue and consultation that followed the exclusion of Cuba from the UN agency's global report in 2010.

WFWO's Communications Team