

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

FOOD - The depletion of global stocks of cereals, coupled with the rise in oil prices, is increasing the risk that the world will face a food crisis similar to that which struck developing countries several years ago, Jacques Diouf, the head of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, said. "For years, we have warned that what is needed is more productivity and investment in agriculture," he said.

ENVIRONMENT - Public health warnings and crippled nuclear reactors in Japan after last week's deadly earthquake and tsunami are raising concerns over reliance on nuclear power - which constitutes 14% of the world's electricity supply. Governments around the world are reviewing safety precautions, and most observers expect the crisis to boost interest in renewable energy sources such as wind and solar.

AFRICA

GAMBIA - The vice president then welcomed the move by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals challenging governments the world over to improve maternal health and to reduce maternal and child morbidity and mortality. She elaborated on some of the great strides being taken to curb maternal and child morbidity and mortality in The Gambia while positing that it is important the Gambian government provides free maternal and child healthcare services to all Gambians at public health facilities countrywide from laboratory services, scanning and vaccination to medical care.

MALAWI - The Ministry of Health imposed the ban, attributing the country's high maternal mortality rate to a lack of skills on the part of traditional birth attendants. TBAs, the ministry said, were not capable of quickly recognising obstetric emergencies cases and failing to provide measures to prevent transmission of HIV from mothers to their newborn children.

NIGERIA - Health professionals in the country have been called upon, to close ranks and work harmoniously to impact positively on the health of the people.

SUDAN - Tens of thousands of people continue to flee their homes in Sudan's western region of Darfur for the safety of internally displaced people's camps after recent fighting between government forces and armed militias.

ZIMBABWE - Human and financial resources need to be scaled up if Zimbabwe is to meet health-related Millennium Development Goals, according to a recent progress report. Although the report launched last week in Harare indicated significant progress towards combating HIV and AIDS, Malaria, and other diseases (Goal Six), inadequate human and financial constraints were hampering progress in reducing child mortality (Goal Four) and improving maternal health (Goal Five).

MIDDLE EAST

OPT - The next generation in the Gaza Strip may be less educated, less professional and perhaps more radical because an Israeli blockade has restricted educational and employment opportunities, say UN and other sources.

WFWO's Communications Team