

# NEWS BULLETIN

16 May 2011



## GLOBAL

**UNITED NATIONS** - In a message marking the International Day of Families, observed every year on 15 May, UN Secretary-General said too many families endure "chronic, punishing hardship" or neglect that can leave them with life-long scars and an inability to escape poverty. "Social exclusion is often at the root of the problem," he said. "Discrimination and unequal access to social services deprive families of the opportunity to plan a better future for their children."

**CLIMATE CHANGE** - Broad agreement on a binding international treaty to combat climate change is possible to achieve at an upcoming Durban summit in December, says the head of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. American officials have said ongoing talks on how to tackle climate change at the international level are based on unrealistic expectations.

**HIV/AIDS** - Treating HIV patients with AIDS drugs dramatically reduces the chances that they will pass on the virus to a partner, a study has found. The findings, part of a \$73 million study spanning nine countries, are cause for optimism in the approach of using antiretroviral drugs to slow the spread of the disease, especially in Africa, where two-thirds of the world's 33 million HIV-infected people reside.

**HEALTH** - The world is experiencing a change in the geographic distribution of diseases. Traditionally, infectious diseases, which claim the lives of so many children, affected poor countries, and noncommunicable diseases like diabetes, cardiac ailments and cancer plagued rich countries. But the latest statistics released by the UNWHO show that the income level of nations is no longer so important, and that all countries now face the burden of both kinds of diseases.

## AFRICA

**COTE D'IVOIRE** - While the overwhelming majority of Ivorian children in the country's central, northern and western regions have returned to classes after the country's post-election crisis, the majority of recently re-opened schools lack critical equipment and facilities, according to a United Nations report.

**DRC/CONGO** - Eighteen months after fleeing across the riverine border separating the two Congos, some 120,000 refugees seem to have little prospect of returning home soon.

**RWANDAN** authorities launched the HIV/AIDS campaign on Thursday, with the aim of reducing the transmission rate among children born to women living with HIV to below 2 per cent. HIV-positive women will receive the best available anti-retroviral regimens as part of the campaign, while the Government also hopes to ensure that all women have access to family planning and to information on HIV prevention.

**UGANDA** - More than 98 percent of Ugandans rely on charcoal or firewood as an energy source. Producing so much charcoal has taken a massive toll on the country's forests. Uganda's National Environment Authority says the country has lost two-thirds of its forests in the last 20 years and would lose it all by 2050 at present rates of destruction. The trees are cut down and then burned in inefficient kilns, releasing large amounts of methane, a greenhouse gas shown to be 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide in global warming terms.

WFWO's Communications Team