

# NEWS BULLETIN

19 July 2011



## **GLOBAL**

**HIV/AIDS** - Researchers believe they are closer to developing an HIV/AIDS vaccine, scientists said at the opening of an international HIV/AIDS conference in Rome. UNAIDS chief called for increased access to antiretroviral drug treatments for millions of HIV patients in the developing world.

**HEALTH** - Current blood tests for tuberculosis often result in false positive or negative results posing a direct danger to patients, the UN World Health Organization warns. The tuberculosis tests are used widely in developing countries, and the UNWHO is expected to issue new guidelines this week.

## **AFRICA**

**HIV/AIDS** - Countries that have been quick to incorporate medical male circumcision into their HIV prevention programmes are already seeing good results compared with those that have been slower to embrace the procedure, say experts.

**MALARIA** - A cheap, widely available drug commonly used to treat river blindness might reduce malaria transmission in Africa, according to research. Researchers in Senegal and the United States found that the transmission of malaria dramatically fell over two weeks in Senegalese villages where people took the drug ivermectin — administered to kill the parasite responsible for river blindness, or onchocerciasis.

**EASTERN AFRICA** - At least 500,000 malnourished children in the Horn of Africa's drought-affected areas risk death if immediate help does not reach them, the UN Children's Fund executive director, has said.

**NAMIBIA** has kicked off a series of meetings with rural and indigenous communities to feed into the country's first bill on access to genetic resources and traditional knowledge.

**SIERRA LEONE** has eliminated fees for pregnant women and children at public health clinics, leading to a rush for services now that it is no longer necessary to give birth at home, risking the death of a newborn and its mother. The new approach to care, which is heavily subsidized by international donors, means trained medical staff are overseeing many pregnancies for the first time -- potentially kick-starting a revolution in health care on the continent.

**SUDAN** - More must be done to address violence in Sudan's troubled South Kordofan province, a report from the United Nations says. Combating forces are deliberately targeting civilians and forcing people from their homes in a systematic campaign of widespread human rights violations.

**SWAZILAND** - Unease is mounting in Swaziland after reports that supplies of antiretrovirals are dangerously low. Resources have never been adequate to tackle the world's highest HIV infection rate in the tiny kingdom, but in recent months, the cash-poor government and dwindling donor funding have led to increasing panic among people living with HIV.

## **ASIA & PACIFIC**

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA** - As Papua New Guinea continues its battle to contain and prevent malaria, officials say the government's decision to resign as the principal recipient (PR) of monies from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, will improve its response.

WFWO's Communications Team