

NEWS BULLETIN

1 December 2011



GLOBAL

CLIMATE CHANGE - The executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, has warned that prompt action is needed to keep climate change from "spinning out of control". But there is little confidence at the latest round of United Nations climate talks in Durban that consensus can be reached on several key issues in the path of effective action to curb climate change, particularly whether to extend the Kyoto Protocol, the only current binding agreement to reduce climate-changing emissions.

HIV/AIDS - The international community has made extraordinary progress in the past decade in the fight against AIDS, but a funding crisis is putting those gains at risk, the United Nations health agencies have said.

HEALTH - The Global Fund, the world's largest backer of the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, has said it is cutting new grants for countries battling the diseases and bringing in a new manager to ensure better administration.

WOMEN - On day seven of "the 16 days of activism to end violence against women" campaign, women's rights organisations around the world are asking what the biggest international financial institutions are really doing to protect women's rights, which are under daily assault.

AFRICA

GHANA has successfully worked to increase female literacy from 16.6% in 1970 to 78% now, helping to trigger development and a trend toward female entrepreneurship. Authorities augmented education efforts with the embrace of microfinance programs that have created an entire class of Ghanaian businesswomen.

KENYA - A shortage of mental health specialists and facilities, ignorance and stigma, are among the challenges facing the provision of quality psycho-social care in Kenya, say specialists.

MADAGASCAR - After more than two years of political crisis, Madagascar finally appears to be moving towards the restoration of democracy. A new prime minister has been appointed, and elections are planned for 2012. Donors who suspended aid to the impoverished island nation are watching these developments closely.

UGANDA is keen to implement new policies to put more people on life-prolonging antiretroviral treatment sooner, as recent scientific breakthroughs indicate would be much more beneficial, but officials say the country's poor financial outlook means there is little chance of this.

ASIA & PACIFIC

BANGLADESHI officials have launched an ambitious plan to reinvigorate the country's food production while promoting the use of renewable fuels. Authorities will install 19,000 solar-powered irrigation pumps across the country by 2016.

CHINA - Some 100 million rural poor in China are expected to become eligible for state benefits after the government adjusted the level at which people are officially regarded as poor. The limit was raised from 55 cents to include everyone earning less than \$1 a day, closer to the World Bank's threshold of \$1.25 a day.

WFWO's Communications Team