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In this Issue

20 March 2013

AFRICA

WATER - Collusion among government officials, unscrupulous water vendors and large farm owners results in diverted water supply lines, misappropriated funds, and failure to implement laws on protecting water sources from encroachment and pollution. These are just some of the ways corruption is denying millions of poor people in Africa access to safe and clean drinking water, experts say.

CONGO - An influx of migrants from the countryside into the Republic of Congo's second largest city, Pointe-Noire, is exacerbating a cholera outbreak that began in November 2012. The outbreak infected at least 389 and killed 10, according to the health ministry and local authorities.

ETHIOPIA - Thousands of children in the pastoral regions of Ethiopia are dropping out of school despite government and donor efforts to bring schools closer to them. Recurrent natural disasters such as drought and flooding, as well as inter-ethnic clashes, are major factors in school dropouts.

KENYA - As the urban population in Nairobi and elsewhere in East Africa grows, so does the solid waste management burden - a situation worsened by poor funding for urban sanitation departments and a lack of enforcement of sanitation regulations.

MALI - Aid workers and experts are calling for more attention to education in Mali, where 200,000 children are out of school due to the crisis but where money for emergency education has yet to come forward.

MOZAMBIQUE has completed its first HIV vaccine trial and is set to embark on a second, a demonstration of the country's increased HIV research capacity.

NIGERIA - An ongoing measles outbreak, which killed 36 children and infected over 4,000 in northern Nigeria between 16 February and 9 March, has been linked to a drop-off in immunizations due to vaccine shortages in regional health clinics and widespread suspicion of the vaccine, say government health officials.

SIERRA LEONE - Thousands of children in Sierra Leone are paying for their own education or helping their families make ends meet by working as rock-breakers for the country's construction industry.

UGANDA - The Ugandan government's draft 2013/2014 budget allocates US\$38.5 million to enrol a further 100,000 people living with HIV on life-prolonging antiretroviral (ARV) drugs. But activists say the money, while welcome in a country still largely dependent on donor funds for its HIV programmes, is not sufficient to meet treatment needs.

ZIMBABWE - HIV/AIDS activists in Zimbabwe have welcomed the government's move to address the problem of HIV drug resistance by introducing third-line antiretroviral drug (ARVs). But it remains unclear how the cash-strapped government will finance this, as procuring the drugs will invariably be expensive and could divert resources away from other HIV treatment efforts.

ASIA & PACIFIC

PAPUA NEW GUINEA (PNG) is a Pacific country rich in natural resources, yet its health staffing levels are comparable to the world's poorest countries due to a rapidly retiring force and lack of qualified replacements.

WFWO's Communications Team