

# NEWS BULLETIN

20 April 2011



## **AFRICA**

**HEALTH** - Data from recent medical trials in Africa show that the lives of nearly 200,000 people could be saved annually if countries with high rates of malaria treated patients with a pricier, yet more effective drug. A medical charity said the drug, artesunate, was not only better, but easier to use than quinine, a cheaper medicine commonly used in poor countries.

**COTE D'IVOIRE** - Hundreds of thousands of urban residents in Côte d'Ivoire could be hit by drinking water shortages in the coming weeks, as the post-electoral violence interrupted the supply of chemicals used at treatment plants throughout the country.

**MALAWI** - At least 4,600 families in Malawi's northern Karonga district have been affected by flooding since the beginning of April after heavy rain caused a dyke to collapse along the North Rukuru River.

**SOMALIA** - Officials and aid workers in Somalia's Middle Shabelle region have raised the alarm over the plight of drought-stricken villagers urgently needing food and water.

**SWAZILAND** - AIDS organizations are struggling to keep afloat in Swaziland's growing financial crisis. Now, the oldest and also one of the biggest support providers, whose programmes reach six out of 10 Swazis in need of such services, is on the brink of closure.

## **ASIA & PACIFIC**

South Asia continues to have the largest concentrations of poor rural populations despite the fact that the wider Asia-Pacific region has made major strides in combating poverty, a United Nations agency said, stressing that agriculture is key to poverty alleviation.

**BANGLADESH** - Lack of regulation and a surplus of donor funds in Bangladesh's microcredit industry have led to NGOs pushing loans to over-indebted borrowers, the world's largest development organization and heavily involved in the country's microfinance industry.

WFWO's Communications Team