

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

MDGs - The growing gap between rich and poor across the world is threatening to undermine the gains countries have made toward reaching millennium development goals by 2015, says the former assistant secretary-general of the United Nations. "Inequality matters not just for those at the bottom," he writes. "Highly unequal countries tend to grow more slowly, are more prone to conflict and have weaker civil societies."

HEALTH - Simultaneously tackling obesity and malnutrition may seem like "polar opposites", conceded UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the High-Level Meeting on Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases in New York, but an increasing number of countries are experiencing higher rates of both and the answer to reducing this phenomenon is the same: better nutrition.

NUTRITION - Agriculture is about food production, but often projects ultimately hurt communities' health and nutrition. When the focus is tons and dollars, experts say, getting people the nutrients they need can be lost.

AFRICA

GHANA - Tens of thousands of children work on Ghana's cocoa plantations - often doing hazardous tasks when they should be at school - but change is coming.

MOZAMBIQUE - A joint initiative in Mozambique to replace thousands of charcoal-burning cookstoves with cleaner, ethanol-burning stoves is being promoted as a means to not only improve the health of women and their families, but to increase incomes of small farmers by up to five times, save thousands of acres of forest and reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

ASIA

MYANMAR - Human rights activists are reporting an increased incidence of rape against Kachin women in areas of recent military attacks by government forces in northern Myanmar.

MIDDLE EAST

SYRIANS should quickly resolve rising tensions between protesters and government forces to avoid their country descending into a civil war that would lead to widespread human suffering, a senior UN official warns.

WFWO's Communications Team