



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs) - Improving performance on meeting MDGs related to maternal and child health will feature prominently on the agenda when the G8 meets June 25 and 26, according to a draft text released in advance of the summit. The global economic crisis has jeopardized 2015 goals on poverty, disease, education, environment and maternal and child mortality rates, the draft warns. G8 representatives will also discuss creation of a legal framework for joint action on climate change.

UNITED NATIONS launches campaign to reduce urban disaster risk - The Haitian capital Port-au-Prince and the cities of Santa Tecla in El Salvador, Baofeng in China and Davos in Switzerland signed up on Tuesday to a new United Nations initiative to better protect urban areas against natural disasters. The UN launched the campaign on Sunday to guide the implementation of urgent disaster reduction plans in cities and towns around the world. Improving urban planning, reinforcing drainage structures, installing early warning systems and taking measures to adapt to the impacts of climate change are some of the practices recommended to increase cities' resilience to disasters. A total of 23 towns across Africa, the Americas, Europe, Asia and the Pacific region have committed to the initiative so far.

■AFRICA

Africa Region - Technology transfer and aid for trade could assist least developed countries (LDCs) suffering the effects of climate change. But negotiations in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) are not helping to make this a reality, while aid for trade lands up at the wrong institutions, such as the World Bank.

BURKINA FASO - Health teams are spraying homes with insecticide in the high-risk southwest, in Burkina Faso's first trial of the method to combat malaria. In 2009 the disease struck more than 20,000 people and killed 110 in the targeted district, according to the Health Ministry.

MADAGASCAR - Far from the world's financial centres, isolated from sub-prime mortgages, collateralized debt obligations and collapsing investment banks, Madagascar is going through a financial crisis of its own, and stock prices are plummeting.

NAMIBIA - Around 300 people held a protest in the Namibian capital Windhoek on Tuesday in support of three HIV positive women who claim to have been forcibly sterilised by state doctors. The women are suing Namibia's Health Ministry for allegedly sterilising them without their informed consent after they were diagnosed with HIV.

■ASIA

AFGHANISTAN - Two international NGOs facing accusations of religious proselytizing in Afghanistan have rejected the charges and an umbrella body has demanded a fair and impartial inquiry into the case.

INDONESIA's most severely mentally ill patients can be so aggressive that their families and communities - desperate in the absence of basic mental healthcare - bind their ankles with chains or keep them in wooden stocks for months or years.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA - Changes to an environmental law in Papua New Guinea mean indigenous people have lost the right to challenge developers and the state over deals involving their land and resources.

SRI LANKA - Medical officials in Sri Lanka have expressed concern over possible health risks as most of the 13,000 displaced by flooding return home.

WFWO's Communications Team