



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - Access to clean water and sanitation has been declared a fundamental human right by the United Nations. A total of 884 million people around the world have no access to safe drinking water, according to the resolution. A further 2.6 billion have no access to basic sanitation. The UN urged the international community to scale up efforts to provide safe, clean, accessible and affordable water and sanitation for all. Some countries criticised the new resolution for not having a clearly defined scope or detailing obligations.

ENVIRONMENT - A comprehensive review of 10 key climate indicators, including sea level, glacier melt and air temperatures, by 300 scientists in 48 countries shows unmistakable signs of global warming, the group says in a report.

HUMAN RIGHTS - An estimated 214 million people currently live outside their country of origin. While for some migration is a positive and empowering experience, far too many migrants have to endure human rights violations, discrimination and exploitation. The High Commissioner urges all concerned "to implement a human rights approach to migration, and to recognise the positive contributions of migrants, protect their human rights in law and practice, and facilitate their integration into host societies."

HEALTH - Some 5.2 million people in developing African countries are surviving with HIV/AIDS because of the administration of anti-retroviral drugs - whose success is making such treatments more costly as HIV victims live longer. Another 5 million people require anti-retroviral drugs in these countries and will require them for the rest of their lives. Activists have grown frustrated with the Obama administration, which they claim has not lived up to funding promises with regard to AIDS - including a pledge for large annual spending increases on the global fight against AIDS.

■AFRICA

Africa Region - Researchers have suggested that biofuel production could be expanded across Africa without decreasing food production. The report claims that there is enough land available in Africa for sugar cane, sorghum and jatropha to be cultivated for biofuel production without displacing food crops. It also argues biofuel production could benefit agriculture in general in Africa, thereby boosting food production. The study was based on a review of existing research and case studies in Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania and Zambia.

BURKINA FASO - The Burkina Faso government launch the construction of 55,000 latrines in rural and urban areas per year to reach by 2015, approximately 54 percent rate of access to sanitation as against 10 percent now to progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

RWANDA - Hundreds of volunteer health care workers in the rural area of Musanze have received cellular telephones from the Rwandan government as part of a new program to help pregnant women and babies. The volunteers use the phones to register and monitor pregnant women in their villages, and communicate information on complications or questions to area clinics.

UGANDA's National Drug Authority (NDA) says the failure rate among samples of medicines tested at their laboratories has fallen by 15 percent from the early 2000s. This serves as a possible indication of a drop in the availability of counterfeit medicines in the East African country.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

HONDURAS - Six months after the inauguration of President Porfirio Lobo, the human rights situation in Honduras continues to deteriorate, according to a short report released by Human Rights Watch.

WFWO's Communications Team