



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - Significant development progress made in the world's poorest countries over the past 40 years has been underestimated, according to a new United Nations report. The UN Development Programme published its annual Human Development Report on Thursday. Some of the report's main conclusions are that aid works and that economic growth is not directly linked to an improvement in human development. It also warns that a failure to tackle climate change and unsustainable production and consumption patterns are the main threats to maintaining this progress in the future.

UNITED NATIONS - The United Nations has issued an appeal to international donors for \$46.8 million in funding to help provide the population of Benin with food, water and medical aid after mass flooding. More than 100,000 people have lost their homes and 680,000 have been affected by the floods so far, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs says.

ENVIRONMENT - As national policies are developed to implement REDD, the UN effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, a key question has been how to ensure social and environmental standards are upheld in REDD projects, both at the national and international level.

■AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA - New South African research shows that AIDS-affected children struggle with educational and mental health issues more than their peers, who are vulnerable for other reasons.

■ASIA

INDONESIA - Indonesian authorities look set to evacuate thousands more residents near the Mount Merapi volcano on central Java island following fresh eruptions on 5 November, which resulted in about 60 deaths.

MYANMAR - On 7 November, Myanmar is holding an election for the first time in 20 years, but Burmese migrants and refugees in Thailand say the polls will not change anything back home and only strengthen the military government.

NORTH KOREA - A UN official says that food aid to North Korea is not enough to counter the chronic malnutrition being suffered by the country's children.

PAKISTAN - The number of polio cases in Pakistan has risen again in 2010, with recorded cases this year already surpassing the 2009 total, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative warns. Pakistan's battle against polio has been hampered by persistent insecurity, ignorance and lack of infrastructure, health officials say. Mass flooding that forced millions out of their homes this summer is likely to exacerbate the situation.

THAILAND - Health experts in Thailand say the odds are stacked against them in combating one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in Asia, with only 2 percent of the country's AIDS budget going on condoms.

■MIDDLE EAST

Middle East Region - Researchers warned on Thursday that the Arab world is set to face severe water scarcity by 2015. A new report by the Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED) claimed that rainfall in Arab countries may be reduced by 25 per cent by the end of this century, while evaporation rates could increase by the same figure. The Arab region is one of the driest in the world and in eight countries people are already living with less than 200 cubic metres of water a year each, according to the report. It also warned that climate change will aggravate the existing water crisis and may contribute to a predicted 20 per cent drop in average yields.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

HAITI - A colourful cholera prevention poster in Haiti has images of smiling people getting water from a tap, a man using a sturdy latrine and people walking a sick boy to a health centre. But these vital tools for fighting the infectious bacterial disease are absent in most communities.

WFWO's Communications Team