

# NEWS BULLETIN

7 February 2011



## GLOBAL

**ENVIRONMENT** - Global warming could yet be accelerated further by the far-reaching drought in the rain forests of the Amazon, where the so-called "lungs of the world" last year produced more carbon dioxide than they absorbed. It is the second time in a decade for the phenomenon, which not only caused many trees to wither and die, but expelled some 8 billion tons of carbon dioxide.

## AFRICA

**SOMALIA** - Several seasons of no rain have left millions of Somalis in dire need of assistance, raised malnutrition rates and forced thousands of families out of their homes, the United Nations and aid agencies say. In some regions, Somalis have seen as high as 70% of sheep and goats die as a result of the drought in the past three years.

**SOUTH AFRICA** is preparing to take HIV testing into the classroom as part of its national voluntary HIV testing and counselling campaign, but testing kids is controversial and implementing the programme is fraught with challenges.

**TANZANIA** - The Tanzanian government has embarked on a large-scale voluntary male circumcision programme aimed at reducing the HIV risk of men and boys in areas of the country with low levels of male circumcision.

## ASIA & PACIFIC

**SRI LANKA** - Health officials in Sri Lanka are keeping a close eye on possible disease outbreaks in areas badly hit by flooding.

## MIDDLE EAST

**EGYPT**'s five-day blockage of the Internet was an expensive move, costing the country about \$90 million in lost business, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In all, blocked telecommunications and Internet during the unrest yielded a loss of 3% to 4% of gross domestic product, or about \$18 million a day. There could be future costs as well, as businesses question whether to set up operations in a country where telecommunications can be shut down abruptly.

**OPT** - More than a week of political unrest in Egypt has heightened the threat of a humanitarian crisis in neighbouring Gaza. Egyptian soldiers fled their posts on the northern border on 30 January, forcing the Rafah crossing - a critical valve for the 1.5 million Palestinians living in Gaza - to close.

**YEMEN** - In the past two weeks, Yemen has been rocked by some of the biggest anti-government demonstrations seen in a decade, as young people facing a grim economic future vent their frustration on the streets.

WFWO's Communications Team