

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - A report from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development criticized governments that were pursuing fiscal austerity programs in order to lower public debts and calm fluttering financial markets. The Unctad report said, "Making balanced budgets or low public debt an end in itself can be detrimental to achieving other goals of economic policy, namely high employment and socially acceptable income distribution."

AFRICA

DEVELOPMENT - Development advocates are looking to promote small-scale farming of drought-resistant crops such as cassava and sorghum in Africa as a means to enhance food security.

CHAD is facing the worst cholera epidemic in the country's history and immediate steps are needed to prevent more deaths, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs warns. More than 11,000 people have been infected and 340 died from cholera since the beginning of 2011.

MAURITANIA - In a bid to reduce food insecurity, the Mauritanian government is turning to several new approaches to agriculture, including expanded irrigation schemes, popularising new crops and harnessing the energy of recent graduates.

SOMALIA - Mogadishu is facing a massive health care crisis as tens of thousands of Somalis arrive in the capital seeking refuge from drought-related famine. Aid groups are also sounding an alarm over displaced families being prevented from reaching Mogadishu by Al-Shabab militants.

ASIA

NEPAL - Learning a lesson from crop failures attributed to climate change, Nepal's women farmers are discarding imported hybrid seeds and husbanding hardier local varieties in cooperative seed banks.

SRI LANKA - More policies and programmes must address the needs of female-headed households in Sri Lanka's former conflict zone, experts say.

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