

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

FOOD AND HUNGER - The world is going into a period of food volatility and supply disruptions due in part to weather-related problems and a backdrop of rising prices, the UNWFP's executive director said. Recent catastrophic weather around the globe could put yet more pressure on the cost of food, an issue that has already helped spark protests across the Middle East, the drought in Somalia is worsening with livestock dying and people on the move looking for food.

AFRICA

KENYA - Maasai women face many levels of discrimination, both from within their community and outside, writes a media officer for Minority Rights Group. They are sometimes considered, dirty, ignorant and backward by men and women from other communities and tribes. They have limited access to national health services and schools and Maasai villagers complain that the Kenyan government is doing little to support them.

UGANDA - Hundreds of thousands of former internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern Uganda have registered to vote in presidential and parliamentary elections on 18 February, but many doubt the outcome will improve their livelihoods.

ZIMBABWE - Public awareness campaigns have helped drop HIV/AIDS infection rates in Zimbabwe by half in just a decade, according to a study published. Zimbabweans changed their sexual behavior in response to better awareness about how the disease spreads, researchers say.

ASIA & PACIFIC

MYANMAR - A massive shortfall in funding means more than 100,000 people are still homeless three months after Cyclone Giri hit Myanmar and thousands are in debt with bleak prospects of recovering their income, aid officials say. Although emergency relief was swiftly distributed and covered the most basic needs after the category four storm struck, aid agencies say they are facing an uphill struggle to help survivors rebuild their lives and find work.

SRI LANKA's garment industry has launched a multi-million rupee campaign to bring in female workers shunning the country's most profitable sector for better paying jobs.

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

VENEZUELA - Millions of cancer patients around the world benefit from a medication called Paclitaxel (Taxol), which may begin to be produced from a new source: fungi found at the summit of Venezuela's flat-topped mountains. But the indigenous communities who have lived in that area since time immemorial will receive no benefits, and were not even consulted on the matter.

WFWO's Communications Team