



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will use the occasion of this week's nuclear security summit to call on world leaders to gather in support of efforts to ban the production of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons. The UN Conference on Disarmament has been considering a ban, but negotiations have been blocked by security concerns from Pakistan.

CLIMATE CHANGE - In advance of the December UN climate talks in Cancun, Mexico, negotiators are keying in on goals that UN Foundation President describes as "the building blocks" of a global climate treaty. Developed countries are working to raise funds to decrease deforestation in Latin America in part to defuse concerns among poorer countries about linking climate funding to accountability for carbon-emissions reductions. Leaders hope that by approaching specific problems individually, such as deforestation, they can build consensus that will carry over into other areas of debate.

HEALTH - Efforts to halt the spread of polio are making progress thanks to better engagement with religious figures in Nigeria and a focused effort on reaching remote areas and migrant populations in India. The two are among the last countries battling to eradicate the disease, and despite the progress polio campaigners warn challenges remain to total eradication.

HEALTH - Global maternal death rates have fallen by an average of 35 per cent over the past 30 years, according to researchers. The WHO announced last May that mothers and newborn babies are no more likely to survive now than 20 years ago. But researchers at the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation in the United States claimed on Monday that there were 342,900 female deaths from pregnancy-related causes worldwide in 2008, down from 526,300 in 1980. They also noted that half of all such deaths happened in just six countries: India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

■AFRICA

Africa Region - The gathering environmental crisis presented by global warming makes effective weather information and prediction a matter of urgency. As Africa's farmers come to grips with adapting to climate change, it may be that the best way to equip them is to involve them directly in collecting the data.

SIERRA LEONE - People with disabilities must be taken into account in Sierra Leone's development and poverty reduction plans, say the authors of a new study on living conditions of the country's disabled.

■ASIA

AFGHANISTAN - Justice action plan heading for oblivion - President Hamid Karzai has refused to extend an action plan for transitional justice which expired in March 2009 but failed to achieve most of its targets, according to human rights groups.

MYANMAR - Coping with water scarcity in the Ayeyarwady Delta - Water scarcity has become a daily challenge in Myanmar's Ayeyarwaddy Delta in the dry season, with thousands still struggling after damage to water sources by Cyclone Nargis in May 2008.

PAKISTAN - Fresh civilian displacements in northwestern Pakistan due to fighting between the Taliban and government troops is likely to place further strains both on those already displaced and on available aid resources, according to aid workers.

■MIDDLE EAST

YEMEN - Making health care accessible for refugees in south - Volunteers at some hospitals in Aden, southern Yemen, have started a new initiative to help African refugees, mainly Somalis, access health care.

WFWO's Communications Team