

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro today stressed the need to protect development gains achieved so far despite the fiscal austerity measures undertaken in the wake of the global financial crisis, saying great social benefits arise from investing in poverty eradication programmes. The eight MDGs, which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015, form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and leading development institutions. They have galvanized global efforts to meet the needs of the world's poorest people. Underlining the importance of reducing the levels of maternal, newborn and child mortality, Ms. Migiro noted said that healthy women delivered and brought up healthy children who then attended school and became part of a healthy workforce that created prosperous societies.

UNITED NATIONS - Fast and relatively short-term action to curb soot and smog could improve human health, generate higher crop yields, reduce climate change and slow the melting of the Arctic, according to a United Nations-backed study released today. The report specifically recommends reductions in emissions of methane and black carbon. Black carbons are a major component of soot and are formed from the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels wood and biomass, including emissions from cars and trucks, cookstoves, forest fires and some industrial facilities.

AFRICA

COTE D'IVOIRE - In parts of Côte d'Ivoire's main city Abidjan, buildings and faces bear traces of war and people wonder when their children will be able to eat their fill again.

SWAZILAND - Erratic pension payments, a rising cost of living and changing social circumstances are leaving Swaziland's elderly with no choice but to fend for themselves and adjust to living alone. This is unprecedented in a country where an extended family system traditionally provided a social safety-net and companionship.

SUDAN - Aerial bombardments, killings of civilians and house-to-house searches are escalating in the Northern Sudanese state of Southern Kordofan, aid workers and residents report.

MIDDLE EAST

SAUDI ARABIA - Self-determination and freedom of movement, the same core principles at the heart of demonstrations that have swept the Arab world, also motivated women in Saudi Arabia who used social networking platforms to organize a mass protest in defiance of the kingdom's ban on female driving. The women "want not just to drive but to remap the political geography of their country," writes an academic.

WFWO's Communications Team