



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - Ongoing conflicts in countries such as Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Somalia are preventing millions of refugees scattered around the world from returning home, according to a new United Nations report. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees' annual report, released on Tuesday, estimates that only 251,500 refugees were able to return home in 2009. The figure is the lowest since 1990, according to the report. The total number of people forcibly displaced worldwide also hit a record 43.3 million, the UNHCR said.

WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION - The World for World Organisation (WFWO) stand up with UNCCD to observe and raise public awareness to achieve our common commitment to the Millennium Development Objectives Goal (7) on the occasion of the World Day to Combat Desertification is observed every year on 17 June. This year, the Day's slogan is "Enhancing soils anywhere enhances life everywhere". The year 2010 is the International Year dedicated to Biodiversity. To this end, UNCCD aims to sensitize the public to the fact that desertification, land degradation and drought dramatically affect the biodiversity resident in the soil. [Read more »](#)

HEALTH - Shifting monitoring responsibilities for HIV/AIDS patients from doctors to nurses has a negligible effect on level of care and could help overcome a worldwide shortage of health care workers, according to a study by South African researchers. Known as "task-shifting," application of such practices has gained support from the World Health Organization.

■AFRICA

Africa Region - The 2010 FIFA World Cup is underway in South Africa and HIV/AIDS campaigners are taking advantage of the international focus on Africa to raise awareness about HIV.

SOMALIA - Children with disabilities in the self-declared republic of Somaliland are a forgotten lot, often not factored into the country's education, livelihood and health policies, child rights activists said on 16 June, during a ceremony marking the Day of the African Child.

SWAZILAND - Much to the frustration of gender activists, Swaziland's Supreme Court has reversed a February 2010 High Court ruling that allowed a married woman to register property in their own name.

■ASIA

Asia Region - Southeast Asian governments added to the US State Department's human trafficking watch list must bolster efforts to prosecute and convict traffickers, activists say.

AFGHANISTAN - Aid workers are struggling to help Afghan women and children overcome drug addiction, adapting Western-style treatment programs to reflect local realities. An estimated 1.5 million Afghans suffer from addiction, but most of the country's 40 treatment facilities are geared toward men.

KYRGYZSTAN / UZBEKISTAN - Clashes between ethnic Uzbeks and Kyrgyz groups in southern Kyrgyzstan since 10 June have killed at least 170 people, injured 1,762 and forced 300,000 to flee their homes, according to the Kyrgyz Ministry of Health and UN agencies.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

GUATEMALA - Corruption in Guatemala's government institutions is undermining efforts to halt rising rates of violence, a former United Nations official claimed on Monday.

HAITI - Haitians are bracing for storm season after a flurry of tropical storms in recent years and January's devastating earthquake left the island country's coping mechanisms stretched to a breaking point. Residents complain Haitian authorities have been slow to make improvements to flood-prone areas like the city Gonaives despite extensive damage to infrastructure and homes long before the earthquake.

WFWO's Communications Team