

NEWS BULLETIN

18 JANUARY 2012



GLOBAL

DEVELOPMENT GOALS - According to a draft agenda of the UN's Rio+20 conference in June, countries around the world will be asked to pledge to meet 10 new sustainable development goals for "priority" areas such as oceans, food, energy, water, consumption and sustainable cities. Governments also will be asked to reform subsidy systems for fossil fuels.

ENVIRONMENT - As many countries continue to grapple with the effects of the global economic downturn on employment, governments are reluctant to take meaningful steps to prepare for climate change because of fears that they will hurt economic recovery. Three specific policies, increased energy efficiency, forest preservation and public transport, can spur growth while combating global warming.

HEALTH - Findings that a one-time oral treatment to cure yaws, a neglected tropical disease, is as effective as the currently recommended penicillin injection have prompted the UNWHO to convene a meeting on how the disease may be wiped out.

WOMEN - As a United Nations committee initiates an inquiry procedure into the alarming number of missing and murdered Native women across Canada, human rights groups are hoping that an on-the-ground investigation by the international body will finally help stem systematic violence against Native women.

AFRICA

An increasing number of African countries are beginning to step away from aid dependency, as the domestic private sector becomes the engine of growth across much of Africa. Currently, at least a third of African countries receive aid that is equivalent to less than 10 percent of their tax revenue. They include Algeria, Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Libya. This is a significant change from years of high dependency on aid.

GHANA is on track to successfully meet most of the Millennium Development Goals, says a professor at Columbia University's Earth Institute. While Ghana is still grappling with pockets of extreme poverty, the county has consistently invested significant funding into health, education and gender-equality programs.

ASIA

PHILIPPINES - A deadly landslide in the southern Philippines in early January underscores the dangers of unregulated, artisanal mining, experts say. According to the International Labour Organization, artisanal miners employ rudimentary techniques for mineral extraction and often operate under hazardous, labour-intensive and illegal conditions.

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

HAITI - Two years after the deadly earthquake, Haiti is seeing a shift from emergency humanitarian assistance to reconstruction, according to top United Nations officials. Outside aid groups and development organizations are urging the international donor community to remain committed to helping Haiti transition from emergency response to sustainable development.

WFWO's Communications Team