



# News Bulletin

## ■GLOBAL

**WATER AND SANITATION** - Almost 39 percent of the global population have no access to adequate toilet facilities, contributing to poor hygiene which kills hundreds of thousands of people every year, a report shows. Safe drinking water remains out of reach for 13 percent worldwide, adds the study by the World Health Organisation and U.N. Children's Fund. The proportion of people defecating in the open - the riskiest sanitation practice of all - has declined to 17 percent of the world's population, or 1.1 billion people, in 2008 from a quarter in 1990.

**CLIMATE CHANGE** - U.N. climate scientists attacked by sceptics after they published an erroneous global warming forecast win support from European Union environment ministers. The ministers also called for the rapid mobilisation of the \$10 billion a year that rich countries have promised to give poor nations to help them tackle climate effects in 2010-2012. In the United States, environmental groups are trying to expand a climate change bill being written in the Senate to help foreign countries pay for enforcing laws they already have in place for protecting forests as one way of reducing carbon pollution.

## ■AFRICA

**AFRICA REGION** - Talking about climate change - God, not global emissions, is to blame for climate change, according to a survey conducted in 10 African countries. A close second, however, came deforestation, underlining the argument that there is information available - just not sufficient or effective enough to help people understand the reasons behind environmental issues.

**ANGOLA / MOZAMBIQUE** - Flooding in Mozambique and Angola has displaced thousands of families, prompting both governments to step up rescue operations and Mozambican authorities to issue a red alert for some areas. Torrential rain that has swept central Mozambique and southern Angola for weeks has caused some rivers to overflow into villages along their paths and many villagers have fled to higher ground.

**KENYA** - The downside of door-to-door testing - While the public response to Kenya's national HIV testing drive has been enormous, many women are not keen to be tested, knowing that a positive result could mean the breakdown of their marriages, loss of home and more.

**MALI** - Mali is hoping to eradicate guinea-worm in the next two years, according to the World Health Organization.

**SUDAN** - Ugandan rebels notorious for mutilating their victims and abducting children have found a safe haven in Sudan's western Darfur region, an advocacy group has said.

**SOMALIA** - Fighting between Somali government forces and al Shabaab rebels in the north of Mogadishu on killed 17 people and wounded 65, according to a Somali human rights group and rescue services.

**SOUTH AFRICA: HIV testing and mental illness** - As more HIV-positive people access treatment and live longer, the number of people suffering from HIV-related mental disorders is growing, but mental health remains an ethical, legal and clinical minefield, where many doctors and nurses fear to tread - and fear to test.

## ■ASIA

**AFGHANISTAN** - U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has suggested in a new report on Afghanistan that the United Nations is ready to continue informal talks with the Taliban but the contact must be discreet, diplomats say.

**SRI LANKA** - Many Sri Lankans who fled to India during their country's protracted civil war want to go home now the conflict is over, but hurdles lie ahead as preparations begin for their return, aid workers say. Tens of thousands of refugees, who belong to the minority Tamil ethnicity, have lived in camps across India's Tamil Nadu state for more than two decades and have assimilated into local communities, but many yearn to return and rebuild their lives in their homeland.

## ■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

**CHILE** - Chilean seismologists studying the 8.8 magnitude earthquake that hit the country on Feb. 27 February will share their data with scientists around the world to aid natural disaster mitigation. The government's revised death toll, down from around 800 to nearly 500, is relatively low considering the force of one of the world's most powerful earthquakes, but the damage to homes, local economies and infrastructure is on a massive scale.

**HAITI** - Haiti will need \$11.5 billion over the next three years to jump-start reconstruction efforts beyond efforts to meet immediate needs, according to a plan created by Haitian officials with help from international experts. The United Nations will host a meeting of international donors this month in New York.

WFWO's Communications Team