

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs) - More than 50 countries are unlikely to meet internationally agreed targets for cutting mortality rates for young children and mothers by a 2015 deadline, according to a report.

URBANIZATION - Nearly all the expected surge in the world's population from 7 billion people to 9 billion by 2050 will come in urban areas of Asia and Africa, and planning for it will be crucial to limit the spread of slums and related social and environmental problems, experts say.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE - Although they are only five percent of the global population, indigenous people account for up to 15 percent of the world's poor, according to a new study published by members of the World Bank. The highest percentages of indigenous people in proportion to the total national population are in China (36 percent), South Asia (32 percent) and Southeast Asia (10 percent), according to "Indigenous Peoples, Poverty, and Development", a treatise on indigenous peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

AFRICA

CLIMATE CHANGE - An alliance of scientists has been formed to help promote cassava, which has emerged as a "survivor" crop able to thrive in the expected higher temperatures engendered by climate change, a scientific conference in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, heard.

COMOROS ISLAND - Some 65,000 people on the Comoros islands, or 8 percent of the population, were affected by flooding, power outages and an increased incidence of disease following heavy rains during the wet season that runs from November through to May.

ETHIOPIA - Up to half a million people risk destitution and hunger under Ethiopia's controversial plans to clear huge swathes of land for gigantic sugar plantations, according to Human Rights Watch which warns the venture could lead to conflict.

NIGER - Since December 2011, the food crisis in Niger has displaced large numbers of people from areas of scarcity to parts of the country that enjoyed better harvests. The social impacts for these internal migrants are serious, not least in terms of disruption of education.

ASIA & PACIFIC

INDIA - A year after the Indian government began paying pregnant women to deliver their babies in state-run facilities, the pressure is showing on the country's understaffed and poorly equipped hospitals.

MYANMAR - About 90,000 people are displaced and in need of assistance in Rakhine state in western Myanmar as a result of communal violence which started over a week ago, the UNWFP says.

WFWO's Communications Team