

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

FOOD - Governments throughout the developing world are implementing a variety of measures - such as price caps, export bans and new rules designed to soften commodities speculation - in a bid to curb rising costs for food. The head of the UNWFP said that countries that fail to address surges in food and fuel prices risk not only economic, but political, instability.

ENVIRONMENT - Researchers and environmental campaigners are increasingly turning their attention to the possibility of carbon tax programs as a more effective means to battle climate change than carbon markets. Supporters feel a carbon tax - levying charges on imports - would be more transparent and equitable than carbon trading mechanisms that allow entities to trade rights to emit greenhouse gases.

AFRICA

ETHIOPIA - Pastoralist communities in two districts of northeastern Ethiopia have outlawed female genital mutilation/cutting, saying it causes serious health problems to the women and is against their culture, a local official said.

SUDAN - A recent rise in violence between government forces and rebels in the Darfur region of Sudan is a cause for serious concern, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon says. Khartoum continues to put up bureaucratic roadblocks to getting the UN-African Union peacekeeping force to full strength and adequate access to populations affected by the fighting remains a challenge, UN Secretary General said in a report on Sudan peacekeeping efforts.

ZAMBIA - New technologies are helping Zambia make the most of its scarce health workers and laboratories in the fight against tuberculosis (TB), and showing that there may be more to a container than meets the eye.

ASIA & PACIFIC

BANGLADESH - Large groups of farmers in Bangladesh are switching from rice cultivation to tobacco farming, creating concerns about possible food shortages, according to the government and anti-tobacco lobbyists.

CINA - A growing number of reports in China's state media have thrust the issue of child abuse into the national spotlight. Many young parents and teachers today have shifting attitudes about corporal punishment, but incidents of abuse are being reported across the country. Affected children are virtually unprotected under the law.

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

HAITI - The number of people dying from cholera in Haiti has been on a downward trend or has stabilized in all ten of the country's departments affected by the outbreak, the United Nations humanitarian office reported, adding that the number of hospitalized people has also been decreasing.

WFWO's Communications Team