

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

HEALTH - Vaccines against measles have been around for decades and are highly effective, yet the campaign against the disease in recent years has had a bumpy ride. The first target of the 21st century - to halve the number of deaths from measles between 1999 and 2005 - was successfully met. So the World Health Organization (WHO) set an even more ambitious goal - to reduce deaths by 90 percent from 2000 levels by 2010.

MALARIA - Some 3.3 billion people are at risk of contracting malaria, a preventable disease that killed 655,000 and afflicted 216 million in 2010, primarily in the developing world.

AFRICA

D.R. CONGO - Poorly integrated maternal health services, a lack of human resources and a serious shortage of money for treatment mean the Democratic Republic of Congo is unlikely to meet the global plan of eliminating mother-to-child transmission by 2015.

ETHIOPIA - A lack of awareness of the importance of skilled hospital deliveries in Ethiopia, cultural beliefs, and transport challenges in rural areas are causing a high number of deaths during childbirth, say officials.

KENYA - Kenyan HIV activists say a ruling by the High Court that the definition of "anti-counterfeit" in the 2008 Anti-Counterfeit Act is too broad will save millions of lives and protect the right to life of citizens.

SAHEL - A coalition of aid agencies has raised one-fifth of the \$250 million sought for emergency assistance to the estimated 6 million people in Africa's drought-stricken Sahel who are facing hunger. The crisis is affecting 15 million people overall.

ZIMBABWE - Thousands of poor Zimbabweans have turned to illegal panning for precious minerals, but environmental and water experts say their activities are contributing to the drying up of rivers which many communities rely on for their livelihoods.

ASIA & PACIFIC

ASIA - Resistance to an anti-malaria drug, artemisinin, is suspected along the Thailand-Myanmar border and in southern Vietnam, but scientists are hoping that it can be contained. Artemisinin resistance emerged on the Thailand-Cambodia border around eight years ago.

BANGLADESH - Activists in Bangladesh are intervening to break up child marriages. One in 5 girls there marry before they turn 15, which typically means they drop out of school and give birth early, sometimes leading to complications.

MIDDLE EAST

YEMEN - Two months after Yemen's new government was sworn in, violence in the south appears to be increasing with attacks and kidnappings blamed on militants, while more than 10 million people are food insecure and almost half a million internally displaced. The UN says at least 800,000 children are acutely malnourished.

WFWO's Communications Team