

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

AIDS CONFERENCE 2012 - New HIV infections are rising at an alarming rate in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, which together have the fastest-growing HIV epidemic in the world, the UN World Health Organization says.

AFRICA

HIV/AIDS - The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB) and Malaria is changing the way it does business, and the way it disburses money. In 2010, after allegations of fraud among fund recipients in Mali, Mauritania and Zambia, the Global Fund put together an independent, high-level panel to review its financial controls and how grant money is spent. The Fund is now implementing the panel's recommendations.

DRC - Conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where M23 rebels and other armed groups are fighting government forces, is dangerously undermining efforts to combat a cholera outbreak.

MALI-NIGER - Swarms of locusts encouraged by early rains are breeding in the north of Mali and Niger, bringing a second generation of insects that could increase 250 fold by the end of this summer and put the livelihoods of up to 50 million people in the region at risk.

SIERRA LEONE - Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, is now the centre of a cholera epidemic after the first confirmed case surfaced in north of the country in February.

SOUTH AFRICA has charted a significant decline in mother-to-child HIV transmission for the second consecutive year, with new data showing that just 2.7 percent of babies born to HIV-positive mums contracted the virus at six weeks of age, compared to 8 percent in 2008.

ASIA

PAKISTAN is putting pressure on the estimated 2.8 million Afghan registered and unregistered refugees to return to their homeland by the end of 2012.

NEPAL will produce close to half a million additional improved cooking stoves over the next five years to benefit rural communities and bring the chance of better health to millions of people, particularly women and children.

MIDDLE EAST

FOOD & HUNGER - One million Yemeni children face severe malnutrition within months as families struggle to pay for food in one of the Arab world's poorest countries, the UNWFP warns. Meanwhile, a charity group said that more children survived past their fifth birthday and attended school at the end of the 2000s than a decade before, but a rise in acute malnutrition could undermine these unprecedented gains.

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

WOMEN & GIRL - In the Dominican Republic, a woman or girl is killed in an act of violence almost daily, usually at the hands of the men who profess to love them. The island's often violent culture of machismo is supported through lax prosecutions. Only 4% of the reported 62,000 cases of violence against women in 2010 went to trial.

WFWO's Communications Team