

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

WATER - The lives of 2.5 million people could be saved every year if governments committed to universal access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation, charity said. Meanwhile, water is increasingly becoming a scarce resource and shortages could drive conflict, hit food and energy production and threaten growth in renewable energy technology, experts warned at a water security conference this week.

HEALTH - Death rates from measles fell 74 percent between 2000 and 2010, missing an internationally agreed target for a 90 percent fall mainly because of low vaccine coverage in India and Africa where the virus kills tens of thousands a year, a study led by the UN World Health Organisation (UNWHO) reveals.

AFRICA

GHANA - Authorities in Ghana this week will begin vaccinating babies against rotavirus and pneumococcal disease, causes of two of the world's biggest killers of children, severe diarrhea and pneumonia, after the GAVIAAlliance struck a deal with drug companies to provide mass quantities of the vaccines at lower prices. No other African country has introduced the vaccines simultaneously.

MALI - Tens of thousands of Malian refugees in Burkina Faso are getting too little aid, too slowly as needs outstrip resources, medical aid group says.

NIGERIA - Only a fraction of the millions of people worldwide with blood and autoimmune disorders survive - especially those in poorer countries - partly due to the lack of bone marrow stem cell transplants. A recently established Nigerian bone marrow registry hopes to boost matches between donors and patients, and survival chances.

SAHEL - A huge shortfall in funding for responding to an unfolding food crisis in West Africa is putting millions of lives at risk, a coalition of aid agencies warns. The United Nations says around 15.6 million people are already hit by food insecurity, due to a mix of drought, insect infestations and high food prices.

SWAZILAND - Hospitals are not protecting their workers from tuberculosis (TB) infection, say nurses in Swaziland, who recently staged a rare public demonstration to draw attention to how vulnerable they are to this highly infectious disease.

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

BRAZIL - The largest landfill in Latin America is about to close outside Rio de Janeiro. The Brazilian government has created a special program to provide job training for some 1,500 "catadores," or waste scavengers, who depend on the dump for their livelihoods.

WFWO's Communications Team