

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

HEALTH - An almost \$1 billion shortfall in funding for the fight against polio is putting global efforts to eradicate the crippling viral disease in jeopardy, global health experts say.

AFRICA

ETHIOPIA - More than half of all Ethiopians have access to an improved source of drinking water, but the country still has much work to do if it hopes to achieve its goal of providing access to safe water and sanitation for its 83 million people by 2015, experts say.

LESOTHO - Initial estimates of the damage to Lesotho's already ailing agricultural sector - caused by a year of too much rain followed by a year of too little - suggest that an unprecedented number of small-scale farmers harvested nothing this year.

MALI - Clouds of desert locusts have arrived in rebel-held northern Mali, where insecurity has hampered pest control, bringing fears that the insects may devastate a country already struck by drought, conflict, and the displacement of more than 360,000 people.

ASIA & PACIFIC

BANGLADESH - Days of rain in Bangladesh, some of the heaviest in years, have set off flash floods and landslides, killing at least 70 people and stranding about 200,000, police and officials say.

VIETNAM - The National Institute for Nutrition in Vietnam is hoping a new locally produced food to treat malnutrition will offer a regional alternative to the peanut-paste treatment known as Plumpy'Nut that is widely used in sub-Saharan Africa.

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

WEATHER - Slow-moving Tropical Storm Debby has buffeted parts of Florida with driving rains and high winds, and is threatening more flooding and tornadoes as it hovers off the state's northern Gulf of Mexico coast.

BRAZIL - In the last decade, Brazil has undergone a family planning revolution. The slowdown in the country's population growth, built on making available better information and contraceptives, and on growing urbanisation, is increasingly looked at as a model by experts around the world trying to find ways to dampen population growth and consumption.

HAITI - Entrepreneurs have come up with a blow-up solar powered lantern that squashes flat like a child's beach ball for easy transport. The lanterns will be tested in camps for Haiti's earthquake survivors and they are expected to improve safety for women and children and help children studying at night.

WFWO's Communications Team