

NEWS BULLETIN

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AFRICA

DEVELOPMENT - Database launched last week shows that nearly 5% of the agricultural land in Africa has been purchased or leased by outside investors over the past decade, confirming reports of so-called land grabs made possible by secretive deals among governments, investors and speculators targeting the developing world.

HIV/AIDS - Insufficient funding has emerged as the biggest obstacle to achieving the goals of reducing HIV/AIDS and improving treatment agreed to last year at a UN-sponsored meeting. Antiretroviral treatment was projected to be provided to 15 million people by 2015, more than double current levels, but it is unclear whether the \$24 billion needed to fund such treatment, chiefly in sub-Saharan Africa, is forthcoming, according to a UN report.

D.R. CONGO - More than 7,500 cholera cases have been identified in the Democratic Republic of Congo since the beginning of the year as an epidemic that began in June 2011 continues to affect parts of the capital, Kinshasa, as well as four other provinces.

LIBYA - Six months after an uprising brought down Muammar Gaddafi's government, thousands of displaced Libyans are still living in abandoned construction sites, empty student dormitories or with host families, too afraid to return to their homes.

MALAWI's new president, Joyce Banda, the first female head of state in southern Africa, discusses in an interview how her experience in an abusive marriage spurred her efforts to advance women's rights.

ASIA & PACIFIC

CHILDREN - The United Nations Children's Fund today voiced alarm at the decline of breastfeeding across East Asia, and stressed the need to ensure that mothers understand the long-term benefits of this important practice for the survival and development of their children.

CHINA's energy development plans for the country's western provinces, heavily oriented toward water-intensive coal, are running up against scarce water resources. "There is not enough water to support a lot of industry and coal operations in western China," says a climate and energy campaigner. "If water resources are exploited by the coal industry, that will lead to land degradation and desertification. And the livelihood of the local communities is damaged."

MIDDLE EAST

SYRIA - The United Nations envoy for children and armed conflict today said she was alarmed by another wave of extreme violence which had resulted in the deaths and injuries of children across Syria and called on all parties to ensure their protection.

WFWO's Communications Team