



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - The General Assembly voted unanimously to create a UN agency devoted to issues of concern to women and girls. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women - to be known as UN Women - will work to promote equality and end discrimination against women around the world.

UNITED NATIONS - One year after the creation of the Global Jobs Pact, members of the International Labour Organisation are considering the measure's impact - and what comes next. On Tuesday, the ILO, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme, hosted a panel discussion and roundtable meeting, "The Global Jobs Pact: Crisis Recovery Through Women's Economic Empowerment," that coincided with the United Nations' 2010 Annual Ministerial Review.

UNITED NATIONS - Sexual violence against women has become part of modern warfare around the world. In some countries, women cannot even go out to draw water without fear of being attacked and raped. The incidents of sexual attacks, both on women and children, have come from several countries, including Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Haiti, Burundi, Guinea and Liberia.

■AFRICA

Africa Region - African leaders should back a monthlong abstinence campaign in a bid to cut new HIV/AIDS infections by as much as 45%, British scientists say. Evidence demonstrates that newly infected individuals are most likely to transmit the virus during the first month after it enters their system, according to the scientists. Supporters of the idea say an abstinence campaign could provide a low-cost way to rapidly enhance countries' HIV/AIDS efforts.

BURKINA FASO - Local food - like sesame, tamarind and certain leaves - is a vital tool in the fight against malnutrition, say aid workers training families in northern Burkina Faso.

EAST AFRICA - Local East African programmes are discovering the benefits of bringing HIV services closer to rural communities, with mobile drug distribution improving HIV-positive patients' adherence to antiretroviral treatment.

GUINEA BISSAU - Paris Club creditors agreed on 6 July 2010 with the Government of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau to alleviate its external public debt, following the approval by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) of a new three year arrangement under the Extended Credit Facility on 7 May 2010. This agreement has been concluded under the so called "Cologne terms" designed by the Paris Club for the implementation of the HIPC initiative interim debt relief. On an exceptional basis, considering the Republic of Guinea-Bissau's limited capacity of payment, creditors have also agreed to defer until after 31 December 2012 the repayment of maturities due by the Republic of Guinea-Bissau on short term and post cut-off date debts, as well as a very significant part of the arrears on those claims. They also agreed to defer all the interest due on the amounts treated. These measures are expected to reduce by more than 98% the debt service (including the arrears) due by the Republic of Guinea-Bissau to Paris Club creditors between 1st January 2010 and 31 December 2012. Paris Club creditors also agreed to treat arrears subject to the Republic of Guinea Bissau's performance under the IMF supported program in order to encourage the Republic of Guinea Bissau to reach completion point under the HIPC initiative. The Republic of Guinea-Bissau is committed to seek comparable treatment from non Paris Club creditors. In this regard, Paris Club creditors called on all the other bilateral creditors of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau including Abu Dhabi, Algeria, Angola, Kuwait, Libya, Pakistan, Portugal, Saudi Arabia and Taiwan to deliver a comparable HIPC debt relief.

■ASIA

LAOS - With just 13.4 percent of the country's 6.3 million people having access to piped water at present, Lao authorities would have to work more than double time if the rest of the population are to have clean and safe water within a decade.

PAKISTAN - While militancy, power outages and skyrocketing food prices hog the limelight in parliamentary and media discussions in Pakistan, health experts warn that it is a neglected issue – the population bulge – that will prove to be a more insidious problem.

PHILIPPINES - A two-day "Investment Forum for Food Security in Asia and the Pacific" opened in Manila on 7 July, and will look at escalating food prices, concerns about food production and overseas leases or purchases of farmland in developing countries.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

ECUADOR - In Ecuador, girl workers conform to universal statistics: they drop out of school less than boy workers, because they learn from an early age to juggle earning an income with looking after younger siblings and getting an education.

HAITI - Children orphaned as a result of the Jan. 12 earthquake face an uncertain future, living in orphanages struggling to maintain operations or adopted by relatives also struggling to recover from the disaster.

WFWO's Communications Team