



Video

Role of philanthropy in preventing deaths from child birth, tropical diseases

The role of philanthropists and philanthropic organizations is crucial in tackling some avoidable health threats which kill millions of vulnerable people every year, stresses Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the opening of Special Event on Philanthropy and the Global Public Health Agenda on 24 February. "Health is a foundation for prosperity, stability and poverty reduction," said Mr. Ban.

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/specialevents/2009/se090223pm.rm?start=00:08:55&end=00:13:52> (5 minutes)

Inside this issue

Division of unpaid and paid work: a source of inequality

Research has shown that when paid work and unpaid work, including household and care work, are combined, women spend noticeably longer hours working than men, p. 1

Making every person count

The strength of the world population must come not from its number but from what each person can achieve, p. 4

Global dialogue on development, p. 7

Trends and analysis, p. 11

Technical cooperation, p. 16

Publications and websites, p. 17

Comings and goings, p. 20

Calendar, p. 21

Feature articles

Division of unpaid and paid work: a source of inequality

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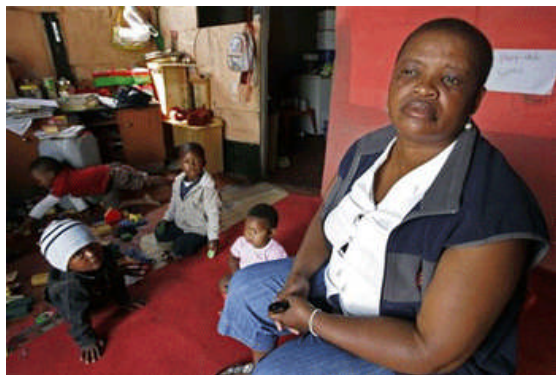
Both women and men undertake paid and unpaid work. This work is unevenly distributed across all countries with women doing more unpaid care work than men and men doing more paid work.

Unpaid work includes activities as diverse as working in a family business, farming or performing

household tasks, such as cooking and cleaning, and caring for family members. In many parts of the world, household work also involves collecting water and firewood. Care work in the household encompasses more than childrearing; it comprises care of all other family members, including the elderly, persons with disabilities and the sick, including people living with HIV/AIDS and with other chronic or terminal diseases that require special or personalized attention.

Most of the household and care work is done by women in all parts of the world, regardless of their socio-economic and employment status. As a result of this dual workload, women work longer hours than men, and have less time for sleep, education, leisure and participation in public life. As a consequence, women are more likely to be concentrated in low paid

jobs marked by occupational segregation, and many may engage in informal and/or temporary or part-time work with lower or no access to social security benefits.



Unpaid work activities, even when measured through time-use surveys, are rarely taken into account in calculations of the gross domestic product (GDP). The System of National Accounts, which sets international standards for GDP measurement, includes contributions to family businesses but excludes household services such as cooking, cleaning, care-giving and volunteer work. While some countries measure and value such activities in “satellite accounts,” unpaid work most commonly remains unrecognized.

Yet, estimates show that the value of unpaid work can be equivalent to half a country’s GDP. In New Zealand, unpaid work carried out in 2001 was valued at NZD\$40 billion, of which women contributed 64 per cent. Researchers have argued that women’s unpaid, unmeasured and unrecognized care work is a crucial contribution to the wellbeing of societies and to economic and social development.

The gender-based division of labour and undervaluing of care-work in the household have been replicated in the public sphere. Women are over-represented in the paid care-sector, in both developing and developed countries. Although the wages and working conditions of paid care workers vary across employment categories and skill levels, many care workers receive lower wages than workers with comparable skills levels in non-care related occupations. In recent years, there has been an increase in the migration of women caregivers across regions and countries, including as domestic workers, nannies and nurses. Most of these women migrant workers lack basic rights, social protection and job security.

Stereotypes about “ideal” women and men occupations

The stereotypical views that women are ideal or “natural” caregivers and men are ideal breadwinners lead employers to distrust women’s ability to fully commit to their jobs and careers. At the same time, men at work are often denied the time and flexibility needed to be involved in family and care-giving responsibilities and thus, tend to be considered deficient caregivers.

The assumption that women have an endless supply of time and energy for caregiving work results in insufficient development of childcare and health care facilities. Almost half of the countries in the world have no formal programmes for children under three, and service coverage is usually limited in countries that have such programmes in place. Moreover, cutbacks in public expenditures have led to a weakening of essential social services in many countries. The lack of reliable, accessible and affordable services, such as childcare thus exacerbates the care-giving burden placed on women. The current financial crisis threatens to worsen this situation.

HIV/AIDS: a care crisis

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has brought greater urgency to the issue of caregiving. It has also drawn attention to both the importance of care work and the weaknesses and insufficiencies of public policies and institutions to address the care needs created by the disease.

Over 33 million people worldwide are living with HIV/AIDS. In low and middle-income countries, nearly ten millions are in immediate need of treatment and intensive and long-term care but only three millions are receiving the treatment and care they require.

In many developing countries, particularly those in which HIV/AIDS is highly prevalent, home-based care is replacing public facilities and clinics as the primary place of care. Lack of medical staff, combined with failing health systems and inadequate resource allocations, has meant that home-based caregivers subsidize many aspects of care provision. Home-based care providers, whether family members or volunteers, often work with little or no training, limited support and without basic equipment to safely perform their tasks.

It has been estimated that women and girls provide up to 90 per cent of the HIV/AIDS-related home-based care. This affects women of all ages: grandmothers take care of their adult children and raise their grandchildren when the parents cannot. In Southern Africa, research has shown that two-thirds of primary caregivers were women, and a quarter of these were over 60 years old.

In the context of HIV/AIDS, provision of care has thus become a major source of inequality. Studies show that the economic pressures resulting from increased care work and foregone opportunities for paid work can lead to greater food insecurity in the household and to sexual risk-taking by caregivers – which in turn, may cause new HIV infections, abuse and violence against women. In countries where women lack property and inheritance rights, households headed by women and girls are particularly vulnerable.

Financial burdens for households are also high, including the loss of earnings when a caregiver stays at home, as well as costs related to the purchase of medicines, transportation to clinics, user fees for health services and rising food costs. The high financial costs of caregiving often lead to debt. In Thailand, almost half of parents who were primary caregivers of someone living with AIDS borrowed money and many never expected to get out of debt.

Multi-sectoral responses

The unequal sharing of responsibilities between women and men has implications for a range of policy areas, including health, social welfare, family, education and labour market. A long-term transformation of individual attitudes and institutional arrangements is needed. This requires constitutional and legal provisions on family, marriage, divorce, inheritance, property rights and employment that guarantee the equality of women and men, and efforts to ensure their full enforcement.

At the same time, measures need to be taken to reduce the existing workload of women. Increased investments in well-functioning and accessible public health and social services and in infrastructure development for access to water, sanitation and energy can greatly contribute to easing the pressure on women and girls.

Governments have also taken a range of policy initiatives to reduce the burden of unpaid work, particularly caregiving, and assist both women and men to combine their work and family

responsibilities. Responses have included leave provisions (maternity, paternity and parental leave), cash benefits, support for care services and facilities run by Government agencies, the private sector or not-for-profit organizations. Flexible work arrangements include reduction of the maximum number of legal working hours, flexibility of work time and location and possibility to take part-time work.

At the United Nations, there is understanding that supporting staff in their family responsibilities will positively affect their productivity. The Secretariat offers maternity leave, and started providing specific entitlements to paternity leave in 2005. Flexible work arrangements include staggered working hours, compressed work time and tele-commuting.

Policy responses, however, have not always been explicitly driven by the objective of reducing the unequal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, and have often been linked to other issues, such as the needs to increase economic efficiency and encourage women's labour market participation, to address the expanded care needs of an ageing population or to deal with declining fertility rates. Some policies have inadvertently exacerbated stereotypes and inequalities. For example, policies on parental leave, childcare facilities and work-life balance that only target women are based on the assumption that women have sole responsibilities for care and fail to recognize the responsibilities of men.

Increased involvement of men

Across regions men are becoming more engaged in efforts to promote gender equality and more equal sharing of responsibilities at household level. In the Latin American region, for example, NGOs have done important work on engaging young men and rethinking the socialization of boys. Instituto Promundo in Brazil developed Program H to encourage men to reflect on stereotypes of masculinity.

In Zimbabwe, a project supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and implemented by Africare, trained 120 men aged 20 to 65 to be volunteer caregivers for people living with HIV/AIDS. The involvement of male caregivers has helped challenge traditional notions of masculinity; and supported men living with HIV/AIDS to overcome the stigma of the disease and seek support.

Through innovative policy measures, awareness raising initiatives and enhanced attention to work-life balance issues, more men are getting involved in the care and upbringing of their children. In 2007, Germany introduced two additional 'partner months' to its parental leave provisions. As a result, the number of fathers who took the opportunity to get involved in childcare in the first few months of their children's lives increased from less than 4 per cent in 2006 to 20 per cent in the second quarter of 2008.

The Commission on the Status of Women – moving forward

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women will consider "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS" as the priority theme during its 53rd session, which will take place from 2-13 March 2009 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

This provides an important opportunity to discuss the causes and consequences of the unequal division of labour between women and men in domestic and care-giving work, and to promote greater understanding and valuing of the contribution of care work to the wellbeing of societies and the functioning of economies.

Reducing the unequal distribution of domestic and care work between women and men is necessary but not sufficient to address the growing challenges of care-giving in society. As the HIV/AIDS pandemic has illustrated, all stakeholders – the State, private sector, civil society - must assume the responsibility for care-giving. This requires policies on social protection and work arrangements, as well as investments in public services and infrastructures that alleviate time burdens and the social costs borne by care-givers.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/53sess.htm>

Making every person count

The strength of the world population must come not from its number but from what each person can achieve

In the 1960s, the world population experienced unprecedented fast growth. The annual population growth rate was then in the order of 2.0 per cent,

which led many observers to fear that the world could be at the brink of a population explosion.

The rapid growth of population, especially in less developed countries, imposes increasing demands on existing resources, and constrains the allocation of economic resources for basic human necessities, including human capital investments in education and health care.



Year 2000 then saw the Millennium Summit, where world leaders adopted eight goals, known as the "Millennium Development Goals" (MDGs) and 189 Member States pledged to significantly help the world's poorest countries by 2015. Back in 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) had also adopted a 20-year Programme of Action.

Recent data, presented in the new Report of the Secretary-General on "World population monitoring, focusing on the contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals" confirms that the world's poorest countries continue to have very high fertility and population growth rates. The combination of high fertility and poverty tends to perpetuate itself, as it leads to limited education, poor health and gender inequalities for the next generations, feeding back to rapid population growth.

While it is simpler to point out the problems than achieve solutions, the United Nations stresses that tackling population and development concerns entails empowering people – particularly women – with better education, good health, including reproductive health, and decent work to enhance the population's overall well-being.

Much progress has been made in the past 20 years along the lines of improved reproductive health care, raising education, income levels and improving the status of women, all of which are related to the decline in birth rates and death rates. However, more needs to be accomplished if the world is to reach the goals of ICPD 1994 and the development targets set in the MDGs.

The ICPD and its Programme of Action established a milestone in the history of population and development, as well as in the history of women's rights, when it emphasized actions based on fundamental human rights and principles. The conference also highlighted the empowerment of women as an essential step towards eradicating poverty and stabilizing population growth.

In line with the MDGs, goals of the ICPD Programme of Action include sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development, education (especially for girls), gender equity and equality, infant, child and maternal mortality reduction, and the provision of universal access to reproductive health services, including family planning and sexual health.

These goals were built upon considerable international consensus that has developed since the World Population Conference in Bucharest in 1974, and the International Conference on Population in Mexico, in 1984. The ICPD of 1994 in particular took a broader view of development issues which reflected the growing awareness that population, poverty, patterns of production and consumption and the environment are so closely interconnected that they cannot be considered in isolation.

With only six years to go before the target date of the MDGs, the 42nd session of the Commission on Population and Development, which will take place from 30 March to 3 April, will further this discussion and intensify efforts by the international community in this front. The Commission will focus on the theme of "The contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals", as it bears in mind human wellbeing, sustainable development and sustained economic growth.

Education for all, including boys and girls

Education deserves particular attention in development objectives for its capacity to promote

sustainable development, improvement in the quality of the working population and the realization of genuine democracy. The direct benefits of education to the well-being of a whole society are considerable – it reduces fertility, morbidity and mortality rates and empowers women.

While significant progress has been made in achieving universal primary education, rapid population growth continues to hinder the fulfillment of educational needs. The 2009 Report of the Secretary-General on "World population monitoring, focusing on the contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals" highlights that countries with the worse education indicators were found to have high proportions of children and high population growth rates.

The Report further states, "Sustained high fertility results in rapidly increasing numbers of school-age children, which translate into increasing demands on education systems and families."

Education certainly has to offer something more than just teach children how to read and write or how to do arithmetic. Young people need quality education which teaches them to recognize traditional values and prepares them for career development and professional life. Their education must also include population issues, gender sensitivity and equality, reproductive choices and responsibilities and sexually transmitted diseases.

It is important to note how both the Programme of Action and MDGs draw attention to "education for all, including boys and girls". This underscores the right of women and the girl child to education. Seventy-five per cent of illiterate persons in the world are women, and continued lack of education, among other factors, perpetuates a cycle of violence and abuse where women exercise little control over family, economic, social and even reproductive choices.

The Programme of Action stressed that increasing the education of women and girls contributes to the empowerment of women, providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to fully participate in the development process. Education also postpones the age of marriage and reduces the size of families.

Women who are better educated are more likely to use contraception and have fewer children. More

importantly, they could also take better care themselves, especially in terms of their reproductive health, and of their children. Hence, the survival rate as well as the health of both women and children increases.

Satisfying health needs

As with education, health, particularly reproductive health, is essential to human development and is also an indispensable tool in improving quality of life. Yet, the challenges in health today are manifold.

The continuing prevalence of HIV/AIDS threatens populations, most significantly that of sub-Saharan Africa. Some countries, on the other hand, face the dangers of malaria. The pervasiveness of these diseases means less spending on reproductive health and family planning, leaving an estimated 106 million married women in developing countries with an unmet need for family planning.

Meeting the need for family planning is crucial as closely spaced births and pregnancies in adolescent and older women put children at increased risk of death. Just as importantly, education in and access to family planning contributes as well to the reduction of maternal mortality, improvement of maternal health, promotion of gender equality, prevention of HIV/AIDS and the reduction of poverty.

Despite the urgency of seeing through the success of these health goals, the full benefits of family planning have yet to be realized. Funding has not kept pace with increasing demand. In fact, between 1996 and 2005, per capita donor assistance devoted to family planning dropped in most regions.

A stronger, more dynamic population

While there is traditionally strength in numbers, it is the living conditions of the population and the opportunities they have that actually determine their level of development. Knowledge and good health provide basic stepping stones for economic and social progress, lifting the population out of poverty, hunger and disease.

The ICPD Programme of Action emphasizes the linkages between demographic trends and development and human rights. Full implementation of the Programme of Action can therefore make a significant contribution to development, a realization of basic human and social rights and the attainment of the MDGs – for both the current generations and beyond.

Based on the Report of the Secretary-General on “World population monitoring, focusing on the contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals” and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/cpd/cpd2009/com2009.htm>

Global dialogue on development

Equality for women

Commission on the Status of Women aims to recognize the full contribution of women to the economy and society at its 53rd session on 2-13 March in New York

Women have historically assumed a major role in the household. Their activities at home include cooking, cleaning and doing the laundry to caring for the children, elderly, sick and disabled as well as helping in the family business like farming and raising livestock. While women have enabled societies to grow, their work in the household has never been compensated nor recognized for its value.

A disproportionate amount of responsibility certainly rests on women, and with persons afflicted with HIV/AIDS on the rise, the burden of caregiving once again falls on women. In its 53rd session, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW-53) will address the priority theme of “The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS” to relieve women of this unequal distribution of responsibility.

In preparation for the upcoming session, two roundtable discussions were organized by the NGO Committee on the Status of Women. The first discussion, held on 3 February, focused on the priority theme. The second one, held on 17 February, centered on the equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels.

CSW-53 will discuss the causes and consequences of the unequal sharing of responsibilities between women and men in the public and private spheres in view of recommending policies to address the inequality and to empower the women of today.

The session commences on 2 March with a high-level roundtable on experiences, lessons learned and good practices according to the priority issue. On the following day, there are scheduled two interactive expert panels on key policy initiatives and on capacity-building for mainstreaming a gender perspective into national policies and programmes on the priority theme.

On 5 March, a panel of experts will consider the gender perspectives of the financial crisis, and on 6 March, the session will review the status of implementation of the agreed conclusion on “Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels”, which the Commission adopted in 2006.

To provide input to the upcoming Economic and Social Council’s (ECOSOC) Annual Ministerial Review, an expert panel on “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health: a gender perspective” will be held on 12 March.

CSW-53 takes place over a span of two weeks. United Nations agencies, funds and programs, as well as Permanent Missions and non-governmental organizations have organized many important side-events to supplement the session.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/53sess.htm>

Emphasizing human rights in development

42nd session of the Commission on Population and Development discusses development goals from 30 March to 3 April in New York

The year 2015 is fast approaching – the year by which 189 United Nations Member States pledged, during the 2000 Millennium Summit, to have significantly helped the world’s poorest countries. It is in this setting that the Commission on Population and Development gathers for its 42nd session.

Carrying on the task of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), where a Programme of Action for development was adopted, the Commission will work on this year’s theme on “The contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals”.

The Commission considers the interrelationships between population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development, advances in education, economic status and empowerment of women. While the past two decades saw advances in areas concerning increased use of contraception, decreased

maternal mortality, implemented sustainable development plans and projects and enhanced educational programmes, much remains to be accomplished. Intensified efforts in population and development activities are thus needed in the coming years, as early stabilization of the world population would make the achievement of sustainable development possible.

It is critical to ensure the success of the ICPD Programme of Action in this regard. The Programme of Action offers a set of objective which focuses on the needs of individual women and men, rather than on achieving demographic targets. Because it recognizes that respect for human rights and development goes hand in hand, the recommendations it provides would have positive impacts on people's well-being, and ultimately lead to development.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/cpd/cpd2009/com2009.htm>

ECOSOC reaches for international health goals

Global Preparatory Meeting for the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in July will be held on 31 March in New York

Global public health is the main theme of the 2009 Annual Ministerial Review (AMR), and in line with this, the Global Preparatory Meeting kick starts preparations for the AMR with a keynote presentation on where we stand on achieving the international health goals.

Two panels will also be held during the meeting: "Impact of the world financial crisis on the achievements of the health goals" and "Health challenges in post-crisis situations".

The conclusions reached in the Global Preparatory Meeting will serve as a key input in the Report of the Secretary-General on achievements in the area of health as well as the AMR Ministerial Declaration.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/ecosoc/newfunct/amrpreparations2009.shtml>

Continuing the task of social development

47th session of the Commission for Social Development concluded with the adoption of resolutions on the most pressing issues in society today

The Commission for Social Development held its 47th session from 4-13 February under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador Kirsti Lintonen of Finland. In view of its 2009-2010 priority theme, "Social integration", taking into account the relationship with poverty eradication and full employment and decent work, this year's review session aimed at building a consensus on social integration and laying the ground for concrete policies to be recommended to Governments at its policy session in 2010.

The Commission discussed "The current global crises and their impact on social development", which was under its emerging issues agenda item, and also reviewed the implementation of the United Nations plans and programmes of action as well as programmes questions pertaining to the situation of older persons, persons with disabilities and youth.

Two panel discussions were held – the first was on the priority theme while the second was in relation to the emerging issues. The Commission also featured an interactive dialogue with the Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Volunteers Programme. Last but certainly not least, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on disability reported on her work in that field over the past six years.

DESA, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization and the Permanent Mission of Kyrgyzstan, launched the first World Day of Social Justice to coincide with the Commission for Social Development. A panel discussion was organized as part of the commemoration of the event.

Several Ministers, Vice-Ministers and other high level personalities participated in the Commission. Among the delegates present were Ms. Paula Risikko, Minister of Health and Social Services of Finland; Mr. Wim Kik, Former Prime Minister of the Netherlands and representative of the Club of Madrid; Ms. Bianca Gawanas, African Union Commissioner for Social Affairs; and Mr. Xavier Prats-Monné, Director for Employment Policy of the European Commission.

Three resolutions were adopted in the 47th Commission for Social Development. These were the resolutions on promoting full employment and decent work for all, on the first review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002, and on policies and programmes involving youth. The Commission also recommended to ECOSOC the adoption of a draft resolution on the “Social Dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development”.

The Chair’s summary of the Commission’s discussion on social integration as well as on the emerging issues of the current global crises will be included in the Report of the session.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/2009.html>

Teaming up for global health

ECOSOC’s Special Event on Philanthropy and the Global Public Health Agenda on 23 February in New York stressed the need to improve health networks in developing countries

The special event of ECOSOC on Philanthropy and the Global Public Health Agenda paved the way for progress in maternal and girl’s health and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). More than 700 participants of the corporate, philanthropic, academic and global health partnerships communities as well as Member States and United Nations representatives worked together to identify gaps and explore opportunities in these areas of concern .

The event featured addresses by the Secretary General of the United Nations, as well as Prof. Klaus Leisinger, President and CEO of the Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development and former President Bill Clinton of the United States.

Mr. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General of DESA, introduced the two leadership dialogues. He underlined that the causes of maternal mortality and infant death, as well as the consequences of neglected tropical diseases, are mostly preventable and treatable.

Participants of the panel on “Improving health outcomes of women and girls” and panelists Ann Starrs, Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, Gary Cohen, Becton Dickinson, Julian Lob-

Levyt, GAVI Alliance, and Jane Nelson, Harvard University, as well as the representatives from UNFPA and UNICEF particularly highlighted that a global initiative, modeled after the HIV/AIDS and malaria collaborations, is needed to raise awareness for maternal and child health.

The panel on “Raising the profile of neglected tropical diseases” with lead discussants from WHO and the Worldbank, and panelists Bernard Pecoul, DNDi, Richard Bagger, Pfizer, Jeffrey Sturchio, US Corporate Council on Africa, and Anne Mills, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, also pointed out the need to create a broader network with its central focus on NTDs.

More dialogue platforms and forums such as the ECOSOC special event are essential in facilitating information and knowledge sharing. Such initiatives should be led by governments and involve all key actors, including the private sector that could contribute its expertise of private management to the public arena.

In addition to the current focus on specific health problems, there is also a need to improve the capacities of health systems. With the backdrop of the global financial crisis, panelists and the audience called for innovative funding mechanisms for development.

Former President Bill Clinton stressed in his closing remarks the need to improve health networks in developing countries, particularly in rural areas, with the collaboration of local NGOs. He also encouraged private sector companies to sell technologies in developing countries that help advance public health, and emphasized the importance for “corporate partners and philanthropists to apply their expertise to maximize the impact of every dollar spent”.

In a press conference leading up to the event, IKEA announced a \$48 million donation to the United Nations Children’s Fund’s (UNICEF) in India. The international medical humanitarian organization Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the Drugs for Neglected Diseases *initiative* (DNDi), which were also present at the press conference, spoke about their collaborative efforts to fight neglected diseases. MSF has committed about \$22.5 million over the next six years to DNDi in the operational and clinical research to drug-development portfolio.

The global network of the Sabin Institute also conveyed its work in the fight against NTDs in the

conference. Finally, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced a \$34 million grant to the Global Network to scale up control of several of the most neglected tropical diseases: intestinal parasites; schistosomiasis, the second most problematic disease among the poor in Africa next to malaria; lymphatic filariasis; onchocerciasis or “river blindness”, which affected 37 million people mainly in Africa; and trachoma.

The Special Event on Philanthropy and the Global Public Health Agenda was jointly organized by DESA and UNOP in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy (CECP).

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/ecosoc/phlntrpy/statement2009.shtml>

Trends and analysis

Setting strategic goals for ICT in Parliament

Hungarian National Assembly will host the third high-level meeting of the Board of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament on 6 March in Budapest

Since its inception in 2006, the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament has grown considerably. It became the main hub for all matters relating to the use of ICT in support of parliaments' most important goals. It is a unique and innovative mechanism of cooperation and partnership which brings together the United Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the national and regional parliaments and development agencies.

The Board of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament is composed of eight Presidents and Speakers of Parliament, the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations and the President of the Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments.

Taking into account the results achieved so far, the Board will be called upon to set the strategic goals of the Centre for the next years and to reaffirm its political support and commitment to the initiative.

For more information: <http://www.ictparliament.org>

Making development happen

Experts meet in New York to review the list of least developed countries and consider global public health, climate change and the recent financial turmoil – and what this all means for developing countries

The Committee for Development Policy will hold its 11th plenary session from 9-13 March, and with the Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) 2009 Annual Ministerial Review soon approaching, deliberating on its theme of global public health is a main topic on the Committee's agenda.

In particular, the Committee will examine the persisting inequalities in health as these inequalities have significant implications for achieving

internationally agreed goals on public health. In the absence of well-targeted efforts to provide necessary health care services for worse-off, neglected and disadvantaged groups, achieving a particular average target will not necessarily indicate that living conditions for all have improved.

At the international level, the Committee will examine whether and how new approaches for development cooperation embodied in the global health partnerships (GHPs) – alliances among public and private entities – have an impact on health inequalities. It will then recommend ways in which GHPs and other formats of international aid can help reduce such inequalities.

The Committee will also conduct the 2009 triennial review of the list of the least developed countries (LDCs). Its objective is to identify those low-income countries that would be eligible to join, and those LDCs already on the list that would be eligible for graduation from the category.

LDCs are made up of low-income developing countries which face severe structural impediments to growth as indicated by high economic vulnerability to external shocks and a low level of human capital development. There are currently 49 countries identified as LDCs, including the Maldives and Samoa, whose graduation has already been taken note of by the General Assembly.

Another item on the agenda of the 11th session is the relationship among climate change, sustainable development and the challenges of development finance. The Committee will consider international funding activities in adaptation, mitigation and technology development. Among the various topics under review, the Committee will examine the prospect of a set of new financial mechanisms to broaden the scope of climate change-related activities. The Committee will also consider private sector and market-based funding for mitigation actions as well as responses to the spillover effects of the transboundary impacts of mitigation.

In addition, the Committee will address the current financial turmoil and its implications for developing countries: With the unprecedented financial turmoil and the deceleration of the world economy, is there scope for counter-cyclical fiscal stimuli and improved access to compensatory financing? What are the prospects for globally concerted efforts to finance fiscal stimuli and to avoid a disruptive realignment of exchange rates?

The Committee draws on the best minds in economics, and among environmentalists and social scientists from around the world, it delivers informed and independent perspectives on the problems of development analysis to its parent organ, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/devplan/>

Reviewing statistics of trade in goods and services

Task forces on International Merchandise Trade Statistics and on Statistics of International Trade in Services will meet in Bangkok from 10-12 March

The major item on the agenda of the Task Force on International Merchandise Trade Statistics (TFIMTS) from 10-11 March will be the revision of the international recommendations on IMTS. The draft revised recommendations are scheduled to be submitted to the Statistical Commission for adoption at its forty-first session in 2010.

The meeting will discuss the results of the first round of worldwide consultation and the recent virtual meeting of the Expert Group on IMTS as well as further work during 2009 and beyond that will include an update of the compilers manual, implementation and critical issues for IMTS. Besides other methodological developments, issues related to trade databases and trade analysis are also on the agenda.

The Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services (TFSITS) from 10-11 March will discuss the revision of the Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (MSITS) with the aim of submitting it for the approval of the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2010.

On the agenda of the Task Force is also a compilation guidance to support the use of the MSITS, problems of data quality and historical consistency, the experience and plans in ECLAC and APEC region, TFSITS web-site and newsletter, upcoming seminars and expert group meetings.

The Joint Session of the Inter-Agency Task Forces on IMTS and of SITS will cover overlapping issues of trade in goods and services and discuss the report from the Statistical Commission and the Working Group on the Impact of Globalization on National

Accounts, Coverage of trade statistics including goods for processing and intra-firm trade of multinationals.

For more information: reister@un.org or kovacs@un.org

Financing sustainable forest management

Informal consultations from 12-13 March in Rome will develop proposals for the development of a voluntary global financial mechanism, portfolio approach and forest financing framework

In November 2008, the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) convened an open-ended ad hoc expert group on this topic in Vienna. At this meeting, experts recognized the need for more discussion on this issue, in particular, it was recommended that Member States provide written contributions to support further elaboration of the proposals. Opportunities should also be sought to conduct additional meetings on the sidelines of other forest-related events, including the 19th session of the Committee on Forestry of the Food and Agriculture Organization taking place in Rome from 16 to 20 March 2009.

In this regard, a consultation meeting is being held in Rome from 12-13 March at the FAO Headquarters, to further the work of the UNFF expert group. Participation by all Member States is welcome to this meeting.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/consultations-SFMfinance.html>

Asia prepares for the Annual Ministerial Review

Three regional meetings in Asia will tackle specific health issues in preparation for the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review

The 2009 Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) is right around the corner. Happening on 6 to 9 July, preparations are already underway to ensure the success of the event. Among these activities are three regional consultations in South Asia, Asia Pacific and Western Asia regarding public health.

There is a need to address specific health challenges because these challenges vary greatly between regions. The regional meetings will bring together stakeholders from different countries at a regional level and provide the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with a snapshot of key challenges of the international health agenda. Each country will also have a chance to share lessons learned and best practices which have been tested in their own regions.

The first of these consultations will take place in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 16-18 March, where the South Asia Regional Meeting will focus on “Financing Strategies for Healthcare”. Given the current global financial crisis, this topic has indeed become a key issue on the global health agenda.

In Beijing, China, an Asia-Pacific Regional Ministerial Meeting will discuss “Health Literacy” from 29-30 April. Finally, in Doha Qatar, the Western Asia Regional Ministerial Meeting from 10-11 May will focus on “The Growing Burden of Non-communicable diseases”.

Leading experts from governments, including local governments, regional organizations, United Nations system organizations, NGOs, foundations, academia and private sector are set to participate in the regional consultations. The regional format of the meetings encourages each sector to assess their progress towards the internationally agreed development goals by region as a whole and to examine disparities according to regions as well.

For more information:
<http://www.un.org/ecosoc/newfunct/amrregional2009.shtml>

ICT's good use, abuse, refuse towards the MDGs

The IX Infopoverity World Conference, held in New York from 18-20 March, will spur the use of ICT as potent development tools

After fifteen years of digital revolution, eight years of Infopoverity World Conference presentations and hundreds of best practices presented and two years of GAID, the international community seems convinced that a strategic and wise use of the ICTs can constitute a crucial element to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

Though, it is becoming more and more evident that most development strategies of the main institutions – within the UN family as well as among NGOs and governmental aids – tend to use traditional approaches that do not sufficiently integrate ICTs in their strategies, or leave them at the margins. Those approaches do not allow the optimization of resources and time, which would be instrumental to achieve expectations in terms of concrete results and lasting changes in the lives of population.

Among the issues and topics to be discussed during the event are new technologies for food security towards the World Fair 2015, past and present challenges and obstacles of ICT4D projects, market and research towards demand-driven ICTs in developing countries and the role and contribution of GAID and its initiatives.

The event will also contribute to advancing the achievement of the MDGs by showcasing and supporting ICT-driven programmes and projects for alleviating poverty and promoting development.

Organized by the Observatory for Cultural and Audiovisual Communication (OCCAM) and the InfoPoverty Institute of the University of Oklahoma with the support of the GAID Secretariat, the conference will bring together key stakeholders from the United Nations system and ICTD practitioners for an exchange of experiences and perspectives to spur the use of ICT as potent development tools.

For more information: <http://www.un-gaid.org/Events/tabid/865/mctl/EventDetails/ModuleID/2249/ItemID/1239/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

The wealth in people

Committee of Experts on Public Administration will examine the role of the human factor in achieving the UN Development Agenda at its eighth session from 30 March - 3 April in New York

With the human factor lies the key to sustainable development. Skilled and qualified civil servants in the public sector are indispensable for the creation of an enabling public administration, which can then effectively engender and maintain talent. At the same time, only a capable and competent public sector, which takes accountability and transparency as its core values, can pursue the public good genuinely and resourcefully.

Against this backdrop the eighth session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration convenes with a focus on the main theme of “Human factor in capacity building and development”. The Committee supports the work of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Secretariat concerning the promotion and development of public administration and governance among Member States in connection with the United Nations Development Agenda. The session is set to open on 30 March with a welcome address by the President of ECOSOC, the H.E. Sylvie Lucas, followed by the opening statement of the Assistant Secretary General for Economic Development, Mr. Jomo Kwame Sundaram. The Committee will finalize its session on 3 April.

Some of the sub-themes to be covered during the eighth session are: Human Resources Management, Accountability, Transparency and Citizen Trust in Government, Serving in the Information Age, and Leadership and Learning. The Committee will review the United Nations Programme on Public Administration and Finance to take stock of past achievements and plan for challenges ahead.

During the session, the Committee will also finalize its work on the online compendium of basic United Nations terminology in governance and public administration. Its purpose is to identify the most important and frequently used terminology in governance and public administration in order to promote clarity in discussions among Member States.

The theme of ECOSOC’s upcoming Annual Ministerial Review – Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health – from the perspective of public administration will also be examined at the eighth session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration.

For more information:

<http://www.unpan.org/DPADM/CEPA/8thSession/tabid/835/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Global public health goes online

A moderated e-discussion on Global Public Health took place in preparation for the much-anticipated ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review

The preparatory process for the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) has so far involved regional meetings and consultations in relation to its 2009 theme of global public health. From 29 January to 26 February, a moderated e-discussion on Global Public Health took place to bring together experts from within and outside of the United Nations system in an online forum where they could share experiences and generate practical input for the 2009 AMR.

The forum was divided into two parts: Part I discussed “Strengthening health systems” until 11 February with 91 contributions and a total of 5,700 subscribers. Part II was about “Emerging and future health challenges” which continued until 26 February.

A conclusion reached after Part I was the agreement on the fact that universal access to primary health care is essential to reduce health inequalities. Participants of the e-discussion offered specific recommendations on how to improve health care, infrastructure and services in remote areas and how to empower vulnerable groups through health education, sustainable health care financing and cross-sectoral partnerships with emphasis on health and education.

Participants of the e-discussion also addressed the shortage of public health workers in Part I. The forum saw a need to focus on the needs of public health workers and emphasized the urgency to train a new workforce. It recommended interventions focused on incentives for public health workers to be able to stay in rural communities and provide high-quality services. The e-discussion also raised the need of setting standards and harmonizing multiple health initiatives in national systems.

Part I concluded with the formulation of innovative forms of collaboration to guarantee high-quality education and training, identifying both as key factors to counter-act migration to cities and abroad as well as dependency of foreign workers.

The second part of the e-discussion on “Emerging and future health trends” proposed national strategies to address the growing magnitude of non-communicable diseases, approaches to enhance trends for global health in the wake of the financial crisis, and innovations for global health partnerships and collaborative arrangements to improve their performance.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/ecosoc/newfunct/amredis2009.shtml>

Traditional medicine matters

A panel discussion in preparation for the 2009 Annual Ministerial Review recognized the importance of traditional medicine in modern health care

Of the series of events that were organized to lead up to the 2009 Annual Ministerial Review (AMR), the ECOSOC panel discussion on “The contribution of traditional medicine to the realization of the International Development Objectives related to global public health”, which took place on 12 February, was actually the first preparatory event for the AMR.

The panel highlighted that traditional medicine was a field where the knowledge and know-how of developing countries was enormous and recognized it as a source of hope for improved health conditions at the global level. Traditional medicine is therefore a field where industrialized countries could substantially gain from the experience of developing countries. However, quick developments in this field also raised concerns about the exploitation of local and indigenous knowledge as well as potentially dangerous practices if appropriate control mechanisms were not in place.

The discussion offered policy recommendations at the national and international level in order to integrate traditional medicine into national health systems, to better regulate the sector and to protect and preserve traditional knowledge.

Normative work carried out by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Intellectual Property Rights Organization (WIPO) in the field of traditional medicine was also presented. Practical examples were also given. One was a health center for indigenous populations in Ecuador in which both types of medicines are used in a complementary manner. Another was the development of the Indian traditional knowledge digital library database which includes the names of hundreds of traditional medicines that can only be accessed for patent searches and examination purposes and are thereby protected from misappropriation.

DESA’s Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination co-organized the panel discussion with the WHO, WIPO and the Secretariat of the Independent Forum on Indigenous Issues, DESA. Panelists included Dr. Xiaorui Zhang, Coordinator for Traditional Medicine, Department of Essential Medicine and Pharmaceutical Policies, WHO; Mr. Antony Taubman, Director and Head of the Global Intellectual Property Issues and Life Sciences Program, WIPO; Dr. Myriam Conejo, Medical Doctor and Coordinator of the *Centro de Salud* (health center) Jambi Huasi, Quito, Ecuador; and Dr. S. Rama Rao, Officer-in-Charge, WIPO Coordination Office in New York, who delivered the presentation by Dr. VK Gupta, Head, Traditional Knowledge Digital Library, Information Technology Division, Council on Scientific and Industrial Research of India.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/ecosoc>

Technical cooperation

Local governance and service delivery in the East Africa Community

Leadership capacity building workshop in Kampala from 5-6 March will harmonize decentralization policies and strategies for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The progress towards achieving the MDGs is mixed with progress not on track in many countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, numerous countries are facing daunting challenges to achieve national, regional and internationally agreed goals, including the MDGs. To tackle these challenges, governments are adopting strategies aimed, among other priorities, at fighting poverty and malnutrition, ensuring social equity, minimizing destructive conflict and making a sustainable use of the environment by adopting new technologies to reduce climate change and better adapt to its negative consequences. All the above strategies are aimed at attaining better living standards of the population particularly the poor and disenfranchised.

The workshop will give an opportunity to East Africa Community (EAC) countries to exchange experiences and share best practices with respect to decentralized governance as well as policies and strategies for the achievement of the MDGs. The key objective of these exchanges will be the identification of strategies aimed at harmonizing local governance policies and actions to improve the delivery of public services. The exchange of knowledge, information and experiences, also analyzing good practices identified and proposed by DESA, will contribute to the enhancement of leadership capacities of the participants.

The event will be organized by DESA's division for Public Administration and Development Management in collaboration with the Government of Uganda and the United Nations Development Programme. It will bring together EAC ministers in charge of local governance, senior public servants, chairpersons and executive secretaries of local government associations, women leaders in local governments, as well as representatives from international organizations including representatives from the United Nations system.

For more information:

www.unpan.org/Regions/Global/Events/Conferences/tabid/458/mctl/EventDetails/ModuleID/1510/ItemID/1250/language/en-US/Default.aspx

Publications and websites

Technical reports



Compendium of Best Practices and Innovations in Public Administration

The Compendium provides an overview of the innovative practices that won the 2008 United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA), which is the most prestigious international recognition of excellence in public service.

The publication disseminates, through descriptive case studies, information about these initiatives by looking at the problem that led to an innovation, the solution that was designed and implemented to respond to a specific problem and the actors involved in the innovation process. It also looks into the implementation steps undertaken, and the lessons learned. Learning more about how public institutions from around the world have solved difficult governance and public administration challenges can be a powerful inspirational tool for those engaged in improving their public service delivery to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

For more information:

<http://www.unpan.org/DPADM/UNPublicServiceDayAwards/UNPublicServiceDayAwards/tabid/566/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Yearbooks



2006 Demographic Yearbook

This Yearbook provides statistics on population size and composition, fertility, mortality, infant and fetal mortality, marriages and divorces. It is the primary source for national population and housing censuses, population-related statistics from national administrative recording systems as well as population and household surveys reported by national statistical authorities.

This issue also presents for the first time data on death rates by cause and by sex. In addition, this edition displays data on marriages, which is cross-tabulated by age of groom and age of bride. This data was not published in a Demographic Yearbook since 1990.

To order: <https://unp.un.org/Details.aspx?pid=18192>



2005 International Trade Statistics Yearbook, Vol. I and Vol. II

The fifty-fourth edition of this Yearbook provides the basic information for individual countries external trade performances in terms of value as well as in volume and price, the importance of trading partners and the significance of individual commodities imported and exported.

Volume I contains detailed data for 173 countries or areas, volume II contains commodity tables showing the total trade of certain commodities by regions and countries as well as additional analytical tables. This is a bilingual publication, in English and French.

To order: <https://unp.un.org/Details.aspx?pid=15833>



2005 Industrial Commodity Statistics Yearbook, Vol. I and Vol. II

This Yearbook is the thirty-ninth in a series of annual compilations of statistics on world industry designed to meet both the general demand for information of this kind and the special requirements of the United Nations and related international bodies.

This edition contains annual data on production of about 600 industrial commodities in terms of physical quantity and monetary value. It is also the first edition that includes data in monetary value and it is presented in two volumes: Volume I: Physical Quantity Data and Volume II: Monetary Value Data. The statistics refer to the ten-year period 1996-2005 for about 200 countries and areas.

To order: <https://unp.un.org/Details.aspx?pid=17697>

Statistical compilations



Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online

The Monthly Bulletin of Statistics presents current economic and social statistics for more than 200 countries and territories of the world. It contains over 50 tables of monthly and/or annual and quarterly data on a variety of subjects illustrating important economic trends and developments, including population, prices, employment and earnings, energy, manufacturing, transport, construction, international merchandise trade and finance.

Vol. LXIII – No. 1, January 2009

Quarterly tables included in this issue: Civil aviation traffic (passenger-km, cargo net ton-km); Total exports and imports by countries or areas (volume, unit value, terms of trade and purchasing power of exports, in US dollars). Publication symbol is ST/ESA/STAT/SER.Q/433.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mbs/>

Update on Economic and Social Statistical Classifications

The Classifications registry keeps updated information on Statistical Classifications maintained by DESA's Statistics Division. Rulings, corrections, interpretations and proposals for future revisions are recorded and these entries can also be searched or viewed sorted by meetings where they have been discussed or the revision process to which they may relate.

As of 1 March, a large set of classifications-related files will be made available for free on this site. These files had been available only on a fee bases before, but will now be freely available to all non-commercial users. This set of files includes complete publication files (in PDF) and complete classification structures with full explanatory notes (in MS Access) in different languages as well as a number of correspondence tables.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/>

Websites



New website of DESA's Division for Sustainable Development

The new design emphasizes the division's mission of promoting sustainable development, both as the substantive Secretariat to the Commission on Sustainable Development, and through technical cooperation and capacity-building at the international, regional and national levels. The new site focuses on the areas of work of the division and the Commission, highlights sustainable development topics, and includes databases and resources. It also features upcoming events and contains a separate area for news and the media.

To browse: <http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/index.shtml>



New website of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament

The new site allows an easier flow of information regarding ICT and parliaments and is enriched with additional information management and knowledge sharing tools. The online resources are presented in a more user-friendly, searchable and interactive manner through the development of a digital library containing a vast number of studies and reports on e-parliament and a repository of ICT legislation.

In addition, the development of a video channel hosts the video reports of conferences, workshops, presentations and tutorials related to the domain of ICT in Parliament. Furthermore the online resources are complemented by detailed information on parliamentary assemblies, inter-parliamentary organizations and parliamentary associations.

To browse: <http://www.ictparliament.org>



Improvement of the 2010 world programme on census website

The site has been modified to present information on how many countries have already conducted a census

and to highlight the corresponding percentage of the world population that has been enumerated. This information will be presented in the form of charts and will be updated regularly to show which countries have already carried out a census, and which ones are either planning or have no information on when they plan a census. Countries that are postponing the dates of their census will be highlighted to ensure follow up and to determine the cause for the postponement.

To browse:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/census2010.htm>

Comings and goings

Goings



Ms. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief of the NGO Section, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, DESA, retired as well on 28 February 2009, having served in that position for the past ten years.

Among her many achievements over these years, she was instrumental in creation of the United Nations Informal Regional Network (UN-NGO-IRENE), developed as a critical channel for communicating key themes and programs between the UN and the NGO community, including marginalized groups in developing countries. Ms. Mezoui has also established a strong partnership among 65 Economic and Social Councils from developed and developing countries in collaboration with the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions (AICESIS).

Prior to her joining of the NGO Section, Ms. Mezoui served in the area of Human Resources for eighteen years where she directed her efforts to bringing nationals from under-represented countries to work at the United Nations.



Mr. Sergei Kambalov, Chief of the ECOSOC and Interorganizational Cooperation Branch, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, DESA, retired on 28 February 2009.

Among his many achievements, he was instrumental in the creation of the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force and the Global Alliance for ICT and Development. Prior to his joining of the ECOSOC and Interorganizational Cooperation Branch, Mr. Kambalov served as Deputy Executive Coordinator of the Secretariat of the ICT Task Force from 2002 to 2005, Chief, Policy Coordination Section, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination from 2000 to 2002, and member of the author team of the World Economic and Social Survey from 1989 to 1997).

Before his service to the United Nations in February 1989, Mr. Kambalov worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR and in academia.

The following staff members also retired in February 2009:

Ms. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief of NGO Section, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination

Mr. Barry Mirkin, Chief of Section, Population Division

Mr. Franciso Ilagan, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

Comings

The following staff members were promoted in February 2009:

Ms. Renata Kaczmarek, Social Affairs Officer, Division for Social Policy and Development

Ms. Celine-Andree, Secretary, Division for Social Policy and Development

Ms. Maria Victoria Tangonan, Meeting Services Assistant, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination

Mr. Billy Chen, Information Technology Assistant, Division for Sustainable Development

Calendar

March

Commission on the Status of Women

53rd session, New York, 2-13 March

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/53sess.htm>

Local Governance and Service Delivery in the East Africa Community

Leadership capacity building workshop, Kampala, 5-6 March

www.unpan.org/Regions/Global/Events/Conferences/tabid/458/mctl/EventDetails/ModuleID/1510/ItemID/1250/language/en-US/Default.aspx

Board of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament

3rd high-level meeting, Geneva, 6 March

<http://www.ictparliament.org>

Committee for Development Policy

11th session, New York, 9-13 March

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/devplan/>

International Merchandise Trade Statistics and Statistics of International Trade in Services

Meeting of the task forces, Bangkok, 10-12 March

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/newsletter/globalstat_unsd_calendar.htm

UNFF Consultations on Forest Finance

Rome, 12-13 March

<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/consultations-SFMfinance.html>

Economic and Social Council

Regional preparatory meeting for the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review

Colombo, Sri Lanka, 16-18 March

<http://www.un.org/ecosoc/newfunct/amr2009srilanka.shtml>

The IX Infopoverty World Conference

New York, 18-20 March

<http://www.un-gaid.org/Events/tabid/865/mctl/EventDetails/ModuleID/2249/ItemID/1239/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Commission on Population and Development

42nd session, New York, 30 March-3 April

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/cpd/cpd2009/comm2009.htm>

Committee of Experts on Public Administration

8th session, New York, 30 March-3 April

<http://www.unpan.org/DPADM/CEPA/8thSession/tabid/835/Default.aspx>

Economic and Social Council

Global Preparatory Meeting for the 2009 Annual Ministerial Review

New York, 31 March

<http://www.un.org/ecosoc>

April

United Nations Forum on Forests

8th session, New York, 20 April-1 May

<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/session.html>

Special High-level Meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods

Institutions, the World Trade Organization and UNCTAD

New York, 27 April

<http://www.un.org/ecosoc/>

Economic and Social Council

2009 organizational session (resumed), New York, 29-30 April

<http://www.un.org/ecosoc/>

Observances

International Women's Day

8 March

The theme of the International Women's Day 2009, celebrated on 8 March, will be "Women and men united to end violence against women and girls". Violence against women and girls is an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their rights and fundamental freedoms.

In adopting its resolution on the observance of Women's Day, the General Assembly wanted to recognize the fact that securing peace and social progress and the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms require the active participation, equality and development of women. At the same time, the world body acknowledged the contribution of women to the strengthening of international peace and security.

For the women of the world, the day's symbolism has a wider meaning. It is an occasion to review how far they have come in their struggle for equality, peace

and development. It is also an opportunity to unite, network and mobilize for meaningful change.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/iwd/>

World Water Day

22 March

World Water Day 2009 will be celebrated on 22 March. This year's theme will be "Shared Water - Shared Opportunities". Special focus will be placed on transboundary waters. Nurturing the opportunities for cooperation in transboundary water management can help build mutual respect, understanding and trust among countries and promote peace, security and sustainable economic growth. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) leads the activities of the World Water Day 2009 with the support of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

The General Assembly declared 22 March as World Day for Water in 1992 to promote awareness of the extent to which water resource development contributes to economic productivity and social well-being.

For more information:

<http://www.unwater.org/worldwaterday/>

DESA News is an insider's look at the United Nations in the area of economic and social development policy. The newsletter is produced by the Communications and Information Management Service of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with DESA Divisions. Prior to January 2007, DESA News was issued every other month. It is now issued monthly.

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