

OMEPE-USNC NEWS^{IN} BRIEF

*United States National Committee of the World Organization for Early Childhood Education
Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire ♦ Organización Mundial Para La Educación Prescolar*

World Organization for Early Childhood Education

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Report on Global Initiatives Impacting Children

From the Good News Agency, www.goodnewsagency.org

Positive and constructive news from all over the world relating to voluntary work, the work of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, and institutions engaged in improving the quality of life of children and families. The Good News Agency is associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information.

CARE and Documentary Photographer Phil Borges Launch the Women Empowered Project

New collaboration uses photos and video to shine a spotlight on women and girls in the developing world.

Seattle and Atlanta, USA, 16 July - Acclaimed documentary photographer Phil Borges and CARE, a humanitarian organization that fights global poverty by empowering women and girls, are continuing a successful multi-year collaboration with today's launch of the Women Empowered Project. Using Borges' photography and video, the Women Empowered Project spotlights some of the issues that women and girls in the developing world face while demonstrating practical, proven solutions to fighting global poverty.

The new website, which was built in conjunction with liveBooks - a San Francisco-based Internet service for professional photographers - includes three mini-documentary films. These three issue areas - maternal health, education and financial services - are signature examples of CARE's work to combat poverty. Additional support during these critical moments can help put women and girls' on a pathway to success.

<http://www.care.org/newsroom/articles/2009/07/phil-borges-women-empowered-documentaries.20090716.asp>

Agriculture Assistance Package a Tremendous Step in Tackling Global Hunger

Focus on getting resources to the poor, particularly for women and children, welcomed by CARE.

Atlanta, GA, USA, 10 July - The Obama administration's announcement of \$20 billion in agricultural assistance for poor farmers is a tremendous start to helping families and countries feed themselves, according to CARE experts. Of critical importance to the success of the program is making sure that assistance reaches the poorest of the poor, often women and girls.

CARE notes the breadth and depth of the administration's pledge. The size of commitment is substantial and includes a particular focus on supporting women and families. The strategy takes into account the effects of climate change on agricultural production, something CARE works on in communities around the globe. And, the initiative includes the essential element of support for good governance to ensure that gains made are gains kept.

<http://www.care.org/newsroom/articles/2009/07/agriculture-assistance-food-aid-hunger-20090710.asp>

J8: Delegates Present Views to G8

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OMEPE-USNC News in Brief Contacts: President Edna Ranck, edna.ranck@verizon.net

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L'Aquila, Italy, 9 July - A select group of 14 young people have met with top leaders at the G8 Summit here yesterday and urged them to act on a set of recommendations aimed at protecting child rights around the world. The youth delegates were selected by their peers at this week's 'Junior 8' Summit in Rome - also known as the J8 - to present a declaration to the G8 world leaders.

The J8 Rome Declaration focused on four key areas: children's rights in the context of the global financial crisis; climate change; poverty and development in Africa; and education.

<http://www.j8summit.com/delegates-present-views-g8>

Save The Children to Reach More Afghan Children With Support From Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation

Two-year grant will help expand programs in water and sanitation, childhood nutrition and education.

Westport, Conn., USA, 7 July - Save the Children today announced it will receive a two-year grant from the Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation to improve the health, nutrition and education of Afghan children living in extreme poverty. In Afghanistan, almost 1-in-5 children dies before age 5, almost half the children are malnourished and only 10 percent of rural women are literate. To address these grim indicators and the obstacles to sustainable development they represent, the Foundation will support Save the Children in expanding programming in water and sanitation, childhood nutrition and education. Access to clean water and hygienic practices are critical to preventing diseases that can be fatal for children. The Foundation grant will fund construction of wells, hand-washing stations and latrines, and ongoing education to support them. Recent drought and rising food prices have exacerbated high rates of malnutrition in Afghanistan. Foundation support will allow Save the Children to greatly expand proven community-based initiatives to treat and prevent child malnutrition in Afghanistan.

<http://www.savethechildren.org/newsroom/2009/afghan-khalifa.html>

ANERA Renovates Preschools in Gaza

Gaza, 15 July - ANERA is pleased to announce the launch of a preschool renovation project in Gaza. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has granted ANERA more than \$93,000 to carry out renovations at 10 different schools throughout Gaza.

The five-month project will affect approximately 1,800 preschoolers in vulnerable and war-damaged communities.

ANERA will incorporate public awareness about its preschool repairs into its existing health education sessions and nutritional surveillance activities in preschools through its Milk for Preschoolers program (MfP). MfP combats malnutrition in Gaza by providing approximately 25,000 children fortified milk and biscuits in 186 preschools in poor and marginalized communities. The project includes renovation and new installation of sanitary facilities and renovation of classroom and playgrounds. The project also provides educational play games and materials for the preschools as well as nutritional surveillance and health education sessions.

<http://www.anera.org/newsResources/PreschoolRehabilitationGaza.php>

Nepal: UN Welcomes Decision to Discharge Thousands of Child Soldiers

17 July - The United Nations welcomed the decision to today begin discharging and rehabilitating more than 4,000 Maoist army personnel - including thousands of child soldiers - in Nepal, calling this a "significant milestone" in the country's ongoing peace process.

The UN special political mission, known as UNMIN, and the world body's Country Team lauded the announcement by the Government and the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M) that they would formally launch the discharge and rehabilitation process today for 4,008 Maoist army personnel (including 2,973 minors), who were disqualified under the verification process following the end of the civil war. In a press statement, UNMIN and the Country Team called on the UCPN-M to cooperate with authorities "to ensure the successful completion" of the initiative. Further, today's launch also "commits to following a discharge and rehabilitation process that will allow the disqualified personnel to choose freely between a range of rehabilitation assistance packages in the coming months," the statement said, voicing the UN's readiness to assist in the process.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31497&Cr=nepal&Cr1>

Dutch charity "Stichting Mensenkinderen" awards \$140,000 to Clear Path International

Posted by: James Hathaway

Harderwijk, Netherlands, 16 June - The Dutch charity "Stichting Mensenkinderen" (www.mensenkinderen.nl) has given a grant for 100,000 Euro (\$140,000) to Clear Path International for its humanitarian mine action work in Vietnam and Cambodia.

In Vietnam, the Mensenkinderen funds will be used to continue Clear Path's aid to landmine accident survivors and family members in the central region (north and south of the former Demilitarized Zone) where they receive everything from emergency medical care and prostheses to home improvement and income-generating grants.

In Cambodia, the Dutch grant money will go to help expand CPI's current network of farmers' coops and to provide services to amputee farmers in the poor communities around its rice mill in Battambang province on the border with Thailand.

<http://clearpathinternational.org/cpiblog/archives/001002.php>

(Editor's note: In 2007, approximately 60 % of ERW (Explosive Remnants of War) casualties were children - 49 % boys, 12% girls – who mistook the devices for toys.)

CHAD: Reducing the Threat to Children and Their Families

MAG has been praised by UNICEF for its work reducing the threat posed by deadly unexploded ordnance in Eastern Chad.

13 July - After a recent surge in violence between government and rebel forces in May, at least six children were tragically killed when several items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) blew up close to the town of Goz Beida. MAG's technical teams collect and destroy any unexploded bombs that are found during detailed surveys of areas known to have been targeted during the conflict. During June, MAG's teams cleared 13,100 items - about 3,700 tonnes - of UXO from in and around Goz Beida. Responding to reports from the International Committee of the Red Cross of contaminated land in other villages, MAG has been sending emergency tasking teams to various settlements to assess the danger. Funded by the European Commission, last week MAG cleared a further 142 items of unexploded ordnance from a town called Am Dam.

Violence in Eastern Chad has driven many people from their homes in recent months. As they return and try to restart their lives they are put at great risk from unexploded ordnance. It is a difficult situation, but Laurette Mokrani, Head of Office for UNICEF in Goz Beida, has congratulated MAG on the fantastic work being done in the region.

<http://www.maginternational.org/news/chad-reducing-the-threat-to-children-and-their-families/>

Rotary International - Clinic Takes Aim at Infant AIDS

by Ryan Hyland

Rotary International News, 15 July - Rotarian Stephen Nicholas, a pioneering pediatric AIDS specialist who helped drastically reduce infant HIV in New York City, is using Rotary as a catalyst for wiping out mother-to-child HIV transmission in the Dominican Republic.

In the early 1990s, New York City had the highest birth rate of HIV-infected children in the United States. Since 2000, only one baby in that city has been born with the virus, says Nicholas, a member of the Rotary Club of Yonkers. Similar trends are appearing throughout the United States, he adds. This sharp drop in mother-to-child HIV transmission has largely resulted from improvements in drug treatments as well as aggressive intervention during pregnancy through testing and education. Nicholas and his colleagues pioneered this multipronged approach while he was the director of pediatrics at Harlem Hospital Center.

In 1999, Nicholas began a family AIDS clinic in La Romana, Dominican Republic, a province with one of the highest HIV/AIDS infection rates outside sub-Saharan Africa. Run by the International Family AIDS Program, the clinic provides direct care and treatment for pregnant women with HIV.

To expand the International Family AIDS Program and keep it sustainable, the Yonkers club, along with the Rotary Club of La Romana and District 7230 (New York), launched the Mother-Baby AIDS Project in the Dominican Republic in 2006.

With help from a US\$50,000 World Community Service Project Grant, the project is benefiting more than 100 HIV-infected mothers and their newborn babies each year. Infected mothers continue to receive AIDS treatment after the births to protect children from being orphaned.

The clinic has lowered the rate of mother-to-child HIV transmission in the La Romana province from 40 % to less than 1 %, Nicholas says.

http://www.rotary.org/en/MediaAndNews/News/Pages/090714_clinicinfantAIDSDR.aspx

In Nepal, ADRA Improves Access to Reproductive Health Care

Kathmandu, Nepal, 14 July - In the remote, conflict-ridden communities of Western Nepal, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is initiating a new project that will improve the access and delivery of reproductive health and basic public health services, providing mobile reproductive health camps, and other support services for more than 21,000 people within the districts of Kalikot in the Mid-Western Region and Accham in the Far-Western Region of Nepal. The European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO) through ADRA Germany funds the 12-month project, entitled "Delivering Reproductive Health (RH) Services through Outreach Medical Clinics to Remote, Vulnerable, and Conflict Affected Populations of Nepal".

By the project's completion, at least 350 women will receive surgery to correct severe uterine prolapse, a debilitating reproductive health condition that affects an estimated 600,000 women in Nepal. In addition, an estimated 21,200 people will receive basic and reproductive health treatment at mobile camps.

http://www.adra.org/site/News2/147395574?page=NewsArticle&id=10270&security=1&news_iv_ctrl=1141

RI Covention, Birmingham - Two Young People Set 'Shining Example' in Polio Fight

by Arnold R. Grahl

Rotary International News, 23 June - Two children who decided to do what they could to rid the world of polio received thunderous applause 23 June during the third plenary session of the 2009 RI Convention in Birmingham, England. Rotary Foundation Trustee Chair Jonathan B. Majiyagbe brought Joshua Kim, a 14-year-old from Northbrook, Illinois, USA, and Anna Zanotti, a 10-year-old from Mantova, Italy, on stage to "share with you the story of these two young people who have taken Rotary to heart."

Anna and her fifth-grade classmates in Mantova raised about US\$164 in only two days after her mother, Rotarian Patrizia Zanotti, told her how Rotary and its partners in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative have worked since 1988 to eradicate the disease. Cases of polio worldwide have declined by more than 99 percent, her mother explained, but the disease still threatens children in parts of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, and more money is needed to finish the job.

“I thought of how many children like me I could save with my money,” said Anna, who came up with the idea of collecting donations as a class project. She used recycled chocolate boxes to make her own collection boxes, one of which she brought on stage. She and her classmates thought of the donations in terms of actual lives, each represented by the 60 cents it costs to immunize a child. “Imagine a chocolate box that contains so many lives,” she said.

Joshua, an eighth grader at Wood Oaks Junior High School in Northbrook, became interested in the fight against polio when he learned that his father’s Rotary club had donated \$10,000 for polio eradication to The Rotary Foundation. After he read an article on the End Polio Now campaign in *The Rotarian*, Joshua decided to donate his entire savings of \$1,200 - seven years of weekly allowance and money earned from neighborhood jobs - to the effort.

http://www.rotary.org/en/MediaAndNews/News/Pages/conv09june23_poliokids.aspx

Working as a Family to Meet Rotary’s Challenge

by Dan Nixon

Rotary International News, 9 July - Rotary’s US\$200 Million Challenge for polio eradication is drawing broad support from the family of Rotary. The challenge is Rotary’s response to the \$355 million in grants received from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Rotary is committed to raising \$200 million in matching funds by 30 June 2012.

Around the world, Rotarians, Rotaractors, Interactors, Rotary Foundation alumni, and others raised about \$78.3 million in cash, District Designated Fund (DDF) allocations, and pledges in the 2008-09 Rotary year as of 15 May. Here is just a sample of their efforts:

Rotarians in more than 200 cities and villages in Switzerland sold packets of sunflower seeds on 13 September, National Day Against Child Paralysis, raising more than \$669,000 with support from the general public. A helicopter golf ball drop/raffle sponsored by District 6990 (Grand Bahama Island, Bahamas; part of Florida, USA) netted \$45,500. The Rotary Club of Washago and Area-Centennial, Ontario, Canada, chartered in 2005, is selling End Polio Now car magnets in a project aimed at raising C\$10,000 (about US\$9,000). Several districts in Japan and Korea have set the pace in contributing more than 20 percent of their DDF, led by District 2780 (Japan) with a donation of US\$200,000. Among contributions made by several Rotary Fellowships, the Rotarians’ Wine Appreciation Fellowship raised \$15,000 by matching donations of \$100 from the first 75 contributors. Foundation alumni have contributed more than \$100,000, including \$6,200 received from the District 3450 Rotary Foundation Alumni Association (Hong Kong; Macau; Mongolia) through its India Night fundraiser. The Interact Club of San Mateo, California, USA, raised almost \$8,000 in an overnight campout and walk for PolioPlus that also featured a band, karaoke, movies, and other activities. The Rotaract Club of Windsor, Ontario, Canada, sponsored a Fashion Fights Polio show, raising more than US\$4,000. (...)

http://www.rotary.org/en/MediaAndNews/News/Pages/090709_200Mchallenge.aspx

Community health volunteers reach remote Tawi-Tawi Islands to educate mothers and children

2 July - After receiving training from ACDI/VOCA, 45 members of community health action teams (CHATs) conducted Tumpukan Na!, or small group action sessions, in Sibutu Island in Tawi-Tawi, to educate mothers and children on immunization, hygiene and nutrition.

The sessions corrected health-related misconceptions through culturally sensitive explanations in order for health workers to provide immunization, vitamin A supplementation and deworming services to children. As a result, 77 children who missed their regular immunization schedules because of prior caregiver resistance were fully immunized and 144 pregnant and lactating women were given iron folate after their concerns were addressed. Almost all (99 percent) of the 12- to 71-month-old children were given vitamin A, increasing the health workers' rate of success from last year's 98 percent. The CHATs' efforts served as an on-the-ground complement to the audio plug of the Secretary of Health of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which called on stakeholders to provide child health support. (...)

<http://www.acdivoca.org/acdivoca/PortalHub.nsf/ID/newsSHIELD-CHATs7.09>

Helen Keller International - 100,000th Screening in Cleveland

Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation provides \$150,000 grant

Cleveland, Ohio, USA, 2 July - ChildSight® Cleveland, a domestic program of Helen Keller International, recently celebrated its tenth year of operation and 100,000th child served. On June 15th, HKI's long-time donor, The Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation, hosted a ceremony for local funders and partners to commemorate this impressive milestone. (...) The foundation also demonstrated its continuing support for the program by presenting a check for \$150,000 for the 2009-2010 school year. ChildSight® provides the Cleveland community with an invaluable and unique service. It delivers free vision screenings, and when needed, free quality eyeglasses to middle school students in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. By going directly to the schools, ChildSight® eliminates the economic, transportation, and social barriers that prevent many poor children from obtaining the eye care they need. (...)

http://www.hkworld.org/about/press_releases/ChildSight_sinai.html

In Sierra Leone, child survival takes center stage

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 24 June - Helen Keller International (HKI) was a major partner in the planning and implementation of the recent maternal and child health campaign known as Mami en Pikin Well Bodi Week (Mother and Child Wellness Week) in Sierra Leone. This bi-annual national campaign, which took place between May 29th and June 1st in all 13 districts of the country, promoted important aspects of maternal and child health, ranging from immunizations to vitamin A supplementation to de-worming. (...)

While the child mortality rate in Sierra Leone used to hover around 250 deaths out of 1,000 live births, in 2008 it was found to have dropped to 140 per 1,000 live births. One of the goals of Mami en Pikin Well Bodi Week is to further reduce the country's infant mortality rate to 101 per 1,000 live births by 2015. (...) It is being followed by a comprehensive yellow fever vaccination campaign in five districts that were identified as being at risk of a yellow fever outbreak.

http://www.hkworld.org/about/press_releases/SL_child.html

Earth Charter on children's website Kidsrgreen

14 July - The Earth Charter is the focus for Kidsrgreen 2009, a children's website developed by the Centre for Environment Education, India (CEE). Kidsrgreen is an online innovative and interactive environmental-education magazine for children. It is managed by the Children's Media Unit of Centre for Environment Education, India. It was selected as one of the finalists for the Stockholm Challenge Award 2008 in the Environment Category. One of the regular features of this e-magazine is Spaceship Earth. Every month this takes up one of the principles of Earth Charter, and links it to different dimensions of our earth and environment through a story, an activity or project idea. The website, now in its ninth year of operation, is popular with children as well as teachers and parents as a fun-filled, interactive teaching-learning resource. From February till June this year, the site has recorded over 37,000 page views. We invite you to visit and use this site at www.kidsrgreen.org

<http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/articles/311/1/Earth-Charter-on-childrens-website-Kidsrgreen/Page1.html>

UNICEF launches kit to help young children caught in emergencies

Geneva, 15 July - A new kit to help meet the developmental needs of young children affected by emergencies was launched in Geneva today by UNICEF Executive Director, Ann M. Veneman.

"The Early Childhood Development Kit is a tool for young children displaced or affected by war and natural disasters," said Veneman at today's official launch in Geneva. "It is the first of its kind within the humanitarian community." Early childhood is the most critical period for brain development, making young children vulnerable to the stresses of war and natural disaster such as hurricanes, floods and earthquakes. The need for a special emergency kit containing materials to help young children regain a sense of normalcy was identified by UNICEF staff and partners responding to emergencies. The kit is a box containing 37 different items, for use by approximately 50 children up to six years of age. Costing \$230, it makes possible a range of activities that encourage development and social interaction and promote playing, drawing, story telling and numeracy. (...) Before being launched, the kit was tested in seven countries - Chad, Liberia, Congo Brazzaville, Jamaica, Guyana, Maldives and Iraq. (...)

http://www.unicef.org/media/media_50262.html

IKEA supports Save the Children's education programs in the U.S. with sales of bookcases

Westport, Conn., USA, 14 July - Starting Monday, July 13 through Monday, Aug. 31, 2009, IKEA U.S. will donate \$5 to Save the Children's Early Steps to School Success program for each EXPEDIT bookcase sold, up to a maximum donation of \$100,000. (...) The Early Steps to School Success program provides early childhood development services for families living in poor, rural communities across the United States. The program gives children access to quality early learning from birth to age 5 - the most crucial period in children's cognitive development. Extensive early childhood research shows that the early years of a child's life shape whether or not a child enters school ready to learn. In addition to offering early education services that directly target children in need, the program also provides support to parents and caregivers, and provides ongoing training to educators in local communities. It is designed to assist children with early language development, social and emotional development and equip parents with the skills and knowledge to support their child's growth. (...)

<http://www.savethechildren.org/newsroom/2009/ikea-bookcase-sales.html>

ESPN promotes 'Soccer Saves' program with Save the Children to help African youth

Sports network to air new public service announcement featuring Seattle Sounders FC.

26 June - Seattle Sounders FC, the newest soccer franchise in Major League Soccer in the USA, has partnered with their fans and the new Seattle nonprofit organization Soccer Saves to support Save the Children's work with older youth in Africa. A new public service announcement is scheduled to air on ESPN 2 on June 26-28, highlighting the initiative, which launched in April. The PSA will air during the Wegmans LPGA tournament coverage. The initiative will help disadvantaged young people in Africa who deserve a chance to grow up with support to lead healthy lives. It's important that all people learn respect for their bodies and each other, stay fit and healthy, and that teenagers understand reproductive health and the risks of HIV. Thanks to a \$50,000 pledge from Soccer Saves, the project will kick off in 2009 in Ethiopia with a series of trainings of soccer coaches in life skills for youth, and an organized club soccer program using the acclaimed Sports for Life curricula. This is aimed at working with young people and their coaches to support healthy lifestyles for young people. (...)

<http://www.savethechildren.org/corporate/soccer-saves/?print=t>

Afghan children heading to school despite attacks

by Giselle Chang

24 June - Despite the ongoing violence in Afghanistan, including gas attacks on girls attending schools this spring, Unicef and other humanitarian groups continue to work relentlessly in the country, heeding the escalating risks while moving ahead with their aid efforts.

In an e-mail message to UNA-USA, Falzul Haque, chief of education at the Unicef office in Afghanistan, described the significant progress the agency continues to make in education regardless of the obstacles. Enrollment in schools, he wrote, has increased to about 6.14 million students in 2008 from less than 1 million in 2001. Of the 6 million, 2.9 million are girls.

Haque added that 3,724 community-based schools have been established in remote rural areas for more than 160,000 children who were previously not in school and the majority of which are girls. Unicef has helped about 100,000 teachers receive training on pedagogy and has developed new curriculums and textbooks for students. Unicef also reported that almost 3,500 former child soldiers in Afghanistan had been reunited with their families and that with its partners, the agency had immunized 5 million children against polio.

Although progress has been made in spreading literacy and offering health care in Afghanistan, Haque stressed that Unicef still faces major hurdles in these areas.

<http://www.unausa.org/Page.aspx?pid=1323>

Working women changing traditional roles in Latin America and Caribbean: UN report

11 June - An increase of Latin American and Caribbean women in the workforce is challenging the traditional interplay between work and family life, a joint United Nations report said today, adding that responding to this phenomenon is an essential step towards gender equality and more productive economies. The report, "Work and Family: A new call for public policies of reconciliation with social co-responsibility," prepared by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), calls for better representation of women in labour negotiations, day care, and flexible hours. The report said that in Latin America and the Caribbean, the number of women active in the labour market rose from 32 per cent in 1990 to 53 per cent in 2008. Today, more than 100 million women throughout the region work. It said the reconciliation between work and family is "one of the greatest challenges of our time (and) a fundamental aspect for promoting equality in the world of work and for reducing poverty." (...)

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31111&Cr=women&Cr1=labour>

(Editor's note: Working mothers mean a greater need for quality child care. OMEP-USA, as a member of the World OMEP Region: North America and the Caribbean, has directed several projects toward assisting countries in this region with improving services to and resources for young children and families.)

Countries gather to discuss improving disability rights

2 September - Representatives of dozens of countries have gathered today at United Nations Headquarters in New York for the start of a three-day meeting to map out practical ways to strengthen the rights of the world's estimated 650 million persons with disabilities. The Conference of States Parties to the UN [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) will focus on improving rights through national laws and other measures at the country level.

The Convention, which entered into force in May last year, asserts the rights to education, health, work, adequate living conditions, freedom of movement, freedom from exploitation and equal recognition before the law for persons with disabilities. So far 142 countries have signed the treaty and 66 have ratified it. The pact's Optional Protocol allows individuals to petition an international expert body with grievances, and this has been signed by 88 nations and ratified by 44. Participants in this week's meeting will take part in round-table discussions and informal discussions, and are also expected to devise the basis for a road map for further actions to implement the Convention. (...)

http://www.hrea.org/index.php?base_id=2&language_id=1&headline_id=9847

International Day for Tolerance – 16 November

In 1996, the General Assembly invited Member States to observe the International Day for Tolerance on 16 November, with activities directed towards both educational establishments and the wider public ([resolution 51/95](#) of 12 December). This action came in the wake of the United Nations Year for Tolerance, 1995, proclaimed by the Assembly in 1993 ([resolution 48/126](#)). The Year had been declared on the initiative of the General Conference of UNESCO. On 16 November 1995, the UNESCO member States had adopted the [Declaration of Principles on Tolerance and Follow-up Plan of Action for the Year](#). The 2005 World Summit Outcome document ([A/RES/60/1](#)), outlines the commitment of Heads of State and Government to advance human welfare, freedom and progress everywhere, as well as to encourage tolerance, respect, dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples.
<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/tolerance/>

Summit encourages collaboration between United Nations and faith-based organizations

Silver Spring, Md., USA, 1 September - Nearly 40 leading faith-based organizations (FBOs), including the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), met at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City in August to discuss the importance of greater cooperation between the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and FBOs in order to better meet the needs of the developing world. During the two-day summit, held August 3 and 4, representatives from the attending FBOs emphasized the importance of not only sharing training and knowledge, but also working together to find answers to important issues, including maternal health and gender-based violence. A need for user-friendly, evidence-based information was also highlighted to help faith-based communities in their role as advocates. (...) Topics presented at the roundtable also included humanitarian relief, migration, and women's empowerment. (...)

http://www.adra.org/site/News2/875914883?page=NewsArticle&id=10461&security=1&news_iv_ctrl=1141

Niger: UNDP boosts livelihoods for women and girls

31 August - About 1,200 conflict-affected women and girls in northern Niger are benefiting from an economic recovery assistance programme that will also promote cooperation among previously conflicting communities. Several training sessions involving these women took place in Agadez and Tahoua, North-East of Niamey. The region suffers from both political instability and inequality between men and women. Many of the targeted women are disenfranchised, widowed, displaced or injured. Some have been the victims of rape. These women are for the first time being involved in productive activities. With a UNDP contribution of US\$120,000, the women received cheques and training on setting up small businesses and designing strategies for reinsertion and building livelihoods. Working with 48 cooperatives of 25, the women are working on income-generating projects, including in the agriculture sector where they will be encouraged to grow their own food. (...) The Peace Consolidation Project in Air and Azawak (PCPAA) is implemented by United Nations Volunteers (UNV) together with Niger's High Commissariat for the Restoration of Peace and Ministry of Territorial Administration and Community Development.

<http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2009/august/niger-undp-boosts-livelihood-opportunities-for-women-and-girls.en>

Microcredit helps cushion Jamaicans in harsh economic times

Kingston, Jamaica, 17 August - Rose Marie Gayle received a US\$200 micro loan that helped her expand her small business selling sweets, juice and phone cards outside a high school in Kingston. (...) Rose Marie Gayle's story shows how access to micro credit can help sustain a small business even during harsh economic times particularly in hard-hit countries like Jamaica. From January 2008 to January 2009, remittance payments from Jamaicans living abroad fell 10 percent, tourism fell by 5 percent and exports plummeted by 13 percent.

It is particularly in times of economic slowdown that the most vulnerable businesses and people need support, said Machel Stewart, Poverty Reduction Programme Specialist at the United Nations Development Programme

(UNDP) in Jamaica. Studies show that microcredit is effective in times of crisis, either by helping keep small business running, avoiding job losses; or as an alternative for those who lost their jobs due to the recession: it is a possibility to start a micro business a chance to reinvent oneself.”

UNDP is playing a key coordinating role in the response to the crisis in Jamaica, mobilizing resources for rapid deployment of assistance to those most affected by the fallout. That has made \$170 million available there, to support development interventions to strengthen small enterprises, create job opportunities and bolster social programs. (...)

<http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2009/august/los-microcreditos-ayudan-a-los-jamaquinos-en-tiempos-de-crisis-economica.en?categoryID=1796994&lang=en>

Save the Children launches emergency response to assist children and families in Indonesia

Westport, Conn., USA, 3 September - Save the Children is deploying an emergency response team and preparing to distribute relief items to children and families affected by the magnitude-7 earthquake that struck off the western coast of Java on Wednesday, Sept. 2.

The earthquake damaged more than 25,000 homes in Tasikmalaya and neighboring towns, according to the Indonesian government. The quake killed at least 57 people, caused landslides burying at least one village and damaged infrastructure. Save the Children, which launched humanitarian responses to the Yogyakarta earthquake of 2006 and to the 2004 South Asia tsunami, had relief items pre-positioned near the earthquake's impact area and plans to begin distributions to help families through the aftermath of the crisis. (...)

<http://www.savethechildren.org/newsroom/2009/indonesia-quake.html?print=t>

Indonesia: Red Cross volunteers respond to West Java earthquake

Cici Riesmasari, IFRC Communications Officer in Jakarta

3 September - In the wake of the strong earthquake that struck western Java on the afternoon of 2 September, staff and volunteers of the Indonesian Red Cross were deployed immediately to provide emergency relief to survivors.

The 7.4 earthquake impacted 12 districts and municipalities in West Java. Tasikmalaya, Cianjur, Garut, and Bandung were the worst affected. According to the authorities 46 people died while hundreds have left their homes overnight, fearful of returning due to aftershocks. In Cianjur, the earthquake was followed by a deadly landslide which has left more than 40 people missing.

The Indonesian Red Cross or Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI) has dispatched 1,500 family tents, 3,000 tarpaulins, 5,000 blankets and sleeping mats as well as 1,000 hygiene kits to the affected areas.(...) In Tasikmalaya and Cianjur branch, Red Cross volunteers evacuated people and provided first aid for survivors. PMI Bandung branch erected platoon tents in Pangalengan sub-district, and distributed blanket to the survivors. Meanwhile in Garut, clean water was distributed to people in Pameungpeuk sub-district. (...)

<http://www.ifrc.org/docs/news/09/09090301/index.asp>

Back To School: nearly 500 Vietnamese landmine families receive Clear Path International support to send their children back to school

30 August - (...) 52 children from landmine-affected families in Dong Ha town (...) received special scholarships from CPI at the school on Aug. 21 as the organization conducted the last round of assistance ceremonies at the start of the new school year. Sadly, Tran Phuong Nhu was a last-minute addition. In all, 482 students in nine districts from four provinces north and south of the former Demilitarized Zone at the 17th parallel received CPI scholarships this year. The scholarship grants are for elementary to high school students who were injured by accidents with unexploded ordnance (UXO) or (...) whose family members sustained injuries from such accidents. UXO accidents still happen almost every week in central Vietnam.

Each scholarship grant worth about \$35 covers most of the minimum tuition even the poorest families have to pay the public schools. CPI also awards special uniform and materials packages to mine-affected students with

the best grades. One hundred and twenty nine, or more than a quarter, of the 482 students this year received such gifts in recognition to their tireless efforts to overcome their challenges at home and at school. (...)

<http://clearpathinternational.org/cpiblog/archives/001006.php>

62nd Annual DPI/NGO Conference, 9 – 11 September, Mexico City

The 62nd Annual DPI/NGO Conference was held in Mexico City under the banner “For Peace and Development: Disarm Now!”. Participants from around the world gathered to discuss how they can contribute to reducing arms while advancing peace. The current global economic and food crises have necessitated a realignment of the world’s financial resources. This can only be enhanced by effect comprehensive disarmament.

The DPI/NGO Conference is the main NGO event of the year at the United Nations. It typically attracts 2,000 representatives from some 90 countries. This year’s conference is organized by a partnership of the U.N. Department of Public Information in cooperation with the DPI/NGO Executive Committee, the Government of Mexico, and the U.N. Office for Disarmament Affairs. For the second time in its six-decade history, the Conference is held outside the United Nations New York Headquarters. (...) <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/conference/>
(See the article at the end of this issue for a complete review of the event.)

Rehabilitation of children from Gaza

20 August - President of the Republic of Slovenia Dr. Danilo Türk visited Ramallah on 30 January 2009 and met with President Mahmud Abbas, Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and other Palestinian leaders where they discussed on humanitarian needs in Gaza and the possibilities of Slovenia to provide meaningful and focused humanitarian assistance. Upon the initiative of President of Slovenia for humanitarian assistance to Gaza, International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance (ITF) together with Institute for Rehabilitation of the Republic of Slovenia (IRRS) and some other non-governmental organization prepared possible projects for this purpose, that included clearance of unexploded remnants of war, technical assistance in battle area clearance as well as physical and mental rehabilitation and capacity building for the experts in the field of rehabilitation.

Following the decision of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, the Ministry of Health, which is one of the founding ministries to the ITF, donated 146,000.00 EUR for the project of rehabilitation of children from Gaza. (...) United States of America donated 140,434.41 USD and South Korea donated 20,000.00 USD (...). Interest to support the project was also indicated by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and many private donors from Slovenia, with whom ITF continues to talk. (...)

<http://www.itf-fund.si/news/news.asp#m282>

Ratification of UN-backed nuclear treaty nears milestone of 150 countries

19 August - The total number of countries that have ratified the United Nations-backed Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has inched closer to 150 after Liberia ratified the agreement this week. Liberia’s ratification on Monday brings the total number of countries having ratified the CTBT to 149, according to the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

The West African nation’s move also means that the pact has 51 signatures and 37 ratifications out of the 53 countries on the continent, where the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Pelindaba, went into effect last month.

To date, 181 States worldwide have signed the pact, which was adopted by the General Assembly in September 1996 to ban any nuclear-test explosions anywhere.

It will enter into force 180 days after all 44 of the States mentioned in Annex 2 of the Treaty - those which possessed nuclear weapons or nuclear weapons technology at the time it opened for signature in 1996 - have ratified it. So far, 35 of these nations, including France, Russia and the United Kingdom, have ratified it, but China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), the United States and Iran, among other nations, have not.

In September, US President Barack Obama is scheduled to chair a meeting of the Security Council focusing on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, including the CTBT.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31809&Cr=Nuclear&Cr1>

United States contributing \$6 million to support demining in northern Sri Lanka

by US Embassy, Colombo,

19 August - The U.S. Government is contributing an additional \$6 million for demining activities in Sri Lanka's Northern Province to help people displaced by the conflict return to their homes as quickly as possible. This funding, through the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Political and Military Affairs Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (State/PMWRA), was granted to four non-governmental organizations (NGOs) currently working on demining activities in Sri Lanka. This additional funding is allowing the demining NGOs to increase their demining capacity and expand their work over the next twelve months. The demining process includes initial assessments of the land where mines may have been planted, technical surveys of minefields, clearing of mines and the destruction of unexploded ordinance. (...)

http://www.sangam.org/2009/08/US_Demining.php?uid=3646

Global Summit of Ministries & Departments of Peace, San Jose, Costa Rica, Sept. 13-21

2009 theme: Building Bridges of Peace

This will be the fourth international summit of the Global Alliance for Ministries and Departments of Peace. Founded in 2004, the Global Alliance is a worldwide community of civil society organizations, committed citizens and government officials from 35 countries, working to establish governmental structures that support a culture of peace. The Costa Rican government, which is co-sponsoring the summit, has recently established a Ministry of Justice and Peace.

The goal of the Summit is to expand the Global Alliance network by involving highly-qualified Summit participants from at least 40 countries, who are motivated to develop peace infrastructure in their home governments.

<http://www.gasummit.org/>

The International Day of Peace - September 21 - to be observed worldwide

Global and local observance planned in every UN nation state

This year's annual global observance of the International Day of Peace, September 21 is capturing the attention of people, communities and nations worldwide. Based on last year's reports, it is estimated that there will be over 10,000 events on the planet this year, sponsored by thousands of organizations, and that over 200 million people will participate. These will range from ceasefires, during which humanitarian aid is administered, to religious and interfaith services. They will include educational activities and volunteer programs; government proclamations, media events, and many types of activities by human rights, environmental, cultural and civic groups to draw attention to their particular aspect of 'peacebuilding'.

There will be large-scale celebrations in cities such as Sydney, Okinawa, Amsterdam, Tehran, Geneva, Paris, London, Montreal, Havana, Buenos Aires, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Honolulu as well as in countries as diverse as Costa Rica, Dubai, India, Uganda, Lebanon, Turkey, Argentina and The Philippines.

Created in 1981 by unanimous resolution of the United Nations, the observance of the International Day of Peace has grown exponentially in recent years and now reaches every level of society. In addition to UN activities, thousands of international and grassroots organizations create events to promote their particular aspects of peacebuilding. Many of these organizations work with The Culture of Peace Initiative (CPI <http://www.cultureofpeace.org/>), a UN designated Peace Messenger Initiative with over 3,000 affiliated organizations. For more information please visit: www.cultureofpeace.org and www.internationaldayofpeace.org

WWF welcomes fading of Europe's incandescent glow

Brussels, Belgium, 28 August - WWF welcomes the ban on inefficient incandescent light bulbs, coming into effect in the EU from 1 September, but it says that equally energy wasting light bulbs like standard halogens should also be removed from the market. The phase-out ban voted by Member States in December 2008 will remove all

conventional incandescent bulbs from the shelves by 2012 and save 15 million tons of CO2 annually by 2020, equivalent to the entire current electricity consumption of Romania per year. (...)

The traditional incandescent bulb is one of the least efficient ways of producing light, along with the standard halogen. It disperses 95% of the energy it uses. The alternatives to energy wasting bulbs are most efficient halogen bulbs, compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and LED (light emitting diodes) bulbs. WWF together with other organisations has launched a web portal (www.topten.info) to inform consumers about the most energy-efficient appliances and lighting equipment across Europe.(...)

http://www.panda.org/wwf_news/news/?172842/WWF-welcomes-fading-of-Europes-incandescent-glow

Bullying on the rise in Mongolia; ADRA helps kids be part of the solution

Silver Spring, Md., USA, 1 September - While cases of bullying, gender-based violence and other related issues are increasing in Mongolia, limited understanding and research still exists on how to effectively curb these problems, reported the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). A recent program instituted by ADRA Mongolia is successfully helping instigators become part of the solution.

The Acting on Gender-violence Awareness through Peer Education (AGAPE) project is an ongoing program that is helping to halt bullying and other violence-related behaviors in primary schools in the capital Ulan Bator's low-income areas, due to the higher rates of bullying and other forms of youth violence reported there. "We teach children how to deal with their problems in a constructive way, and how to resolve conflicts between them in a peaceful manner," said Carly Fletcher of ADRA Mongolia. The project also trains peer educators and adult educators with essential life-skills, teaching them how to communicate better and be more tolerant of others. (...)

http://www.adra.org/site/News2/875914883?page=NewsArticle&id=10463&security=1&news_iv_ctrl=1141

GlobalGiving, Intel and CARE to support quality education around the world

New project in rural Egypt extends CARE's power within program.

Washington, D.C., 1 September - In the spirit of "back to school," GlobalGiving and Intel announced they are working with CARE on the first project being supported by the Technology for Education Fund. Through a \$45,000 grant from the Fund, CARE will deliver new technology and training to teachers and approximately 13,000 students - more than half girls - living in rural Egypt.

The grant to CARE represents the official launch of the Technology for Education Fund. The Fund campaign aims to raise a total of \$100,000 to support programs in developing countries that will use technology to enhance the quality of education. To date, Intel has contributed \$50,000 to the Fund, and hopes to attract additional donors interested in supporting high-impact educational initiatives in impoverished communities. GlobalGiving, the leading marketplace for philanthropy, is providing the online platform through which donors can support the Fund (www.globalgiving.com/techforeducation); as an incentive, Intel is offering \$15,000 to match - dollar for dollar - individual donations to the Fund through the end of 2009. (...)

<http://www.care.org/newsroom/articles/2009/10/globalgiving-intel-power-within-education-20090901.asp>

SIGNIS World Congress 2009: Workshops on Children and Media – Thailand, 17-21 October

Brussels, 26 August (SIGNIS) - The SIGNIS World Congress 2009 to be held in Chiang Mai will include 16 workshops for media professionals from different audiovisual areas. In accordance with the Congress' theme «Media for a Culture of Peace - Children's Rights, Tomorrow's Promise», some of the workshops will be directed towards the relationship between children and the media.

The SIGNIS World Congress 2009 will take place in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 17 to 21 October 2009. Hundreds of communication professionals from all over the world are expected at the Congress built around three strands: *Global Issues on Human Rights and Children's Rights, Emerging Perspectives on Media and Social Transformation* and *The Challenges of Growing Up in a Digital Age*. <http://www.signis.net>

<http://www.signisworldcongress.net/2009/spip.php?rubrique37>

Earth Charter - New project to develop indicators for values-based educational experiences

21 August - The ECI Secretariat joined a consortium of organizations and research institutions in a two-year research project to develop indicators to measure values components of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) projects. (...) The research work and coordination of the project is carried out by the University of Brighton (UK) and Charles University (Czech Republic). They will work in collaboration with several CSOs (civil society organizations) to learn about their projects and experiences and will guide the process to develop the indicators and assessment tools. These will help participating CSOs to measure their impact and effectiveness in achieving their project's goals. (...) [For more information click here](#)
www.earthcharter.org

The 2009 State of the Future is now available

This "report card on the future" distills the collective intelligence of over 2,700 leading scientists, futurists, scholars, and policy advisors who work for governments, corporations, non-governmental organizations, universities, and international organizations. The *2009 State of the Future* comes in two parts: a 100-page print executive summary and an attached CD containing about 6,700 pages of research behind the print edition and the Millennium Project's 13 years of cumulative research and methods. It is produced by the Millennium Project with its 32 Nodes (groups of futurists and organizations) around the world, which collects, feeds back, and assesses insights from creative and knowledgeable people on emerging crises, opportunities, strategic priorities, and the feasibility of actions.

A paragraph of the Executive Summary, which can be downloaded freely, says:

"After 13 years of the Millennium Project's global futures research, it is increasingly clear that the world has the resources to address its challenges. Coherence and direction has been lacking. But recent meetings of the U.S. and China, as well as of NATO and Russia, and the birth of the G-20 plus the continued work of the G-8 promise to improve global strategic collaboration. It remains to be seen if this spirit of cooperation can continue and if decisions will be made on the scale necessary to really address the global challenges discussed in this report."

Invaluable insights into the future for the United Nations, its Member States, and civil society. - Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General, United Nations

<http://www.millennium-project.org/millennium/sof2009.html>

New Earth Charter channel in YouTube

The Earth Charter International Secretariat has recently launched a video channel on YouTube.

The channel address is <http://www.youtube.com/user/ECInternational>, and it currently features 37 videos about the Earth Charter in a variety of languages. The videos include advertisements and introductory videos about the Earth Charter, information about various Earth Charter related activities around the world and interviews with individuals such as Ruud Lubbers, Leonardo Boff, David Korten, Maria Novo, Moacir Gadotti, Edgar Gonzalez and many others.

Our channel, called ECInternational, also lists a number of our favorite videos related to the Earth Charter and provides links to our subscribers and friends. (...)

With this channel, we hope groups from around the world will: be stimulated to record and post short videos sharing their experiences in working with the Earth Charter, learn from one another and use in workshops or as an educational resource.

<http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/articles/325/1/New-Earth-Charter-Channel-in-YouTube/Page1.html>

UMAPAZ spearheading Earth Charter Teacher Training Programme in schools of Sao Paulo

Since 2007, UMAPAZ (the Open University of Environment and a Culture of Peace) has operated an awareness raising and educational programme in schools of Sao Paulo, Brazil and will offer an Earth Charter Action course starting this August 2009. The purpose of the programme is to promote the values and principles of the Earth Charter within the municipal education network - contributing with the understanding of the sustainability vision and of social-environmental issues. UMAPAZ functions under the Environment Secretary of the city government

of Sao Paulo and this teacher training programme is part of the implementation of an agreement between this Secretary and the Secretary of Education (Secretaria Municipal de Educação [SME]) of the city of Sao Paulo. For more information:

www.earthcharter.org



News On Children's Issues

from the Global Fund for Children
www.globalfundforchildren.org

The Global Fund for Children's mission is to advance the dignity of children and youth around the world.

Global recession boosts child prostitution and trafficking in Asia

Commercial sexual exploitation of children is booming in Southeast Asia, with governments failing to do enough to protect young people, experts say. According to a recent report by the group, increasing poverty, reduced budgets for social services, and restrictive immigration laws in "destination countries" are among the factors heightening children's vulnerability. Added to that, deteriorating household living conditions often compel young people to abandon school to contribute to the family income, exposing them to risk as they seek livelihood options that could result in exploitation, the report states. The International Labor Organization estimates that sex tourism contributes 2-14 percent of the gross domestic product of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), an estimated 1.8 million children (mainly girls but also a significant number of boys) enter the multi-billion dollar commercial sex trade annually. ([IRIN, September 29](#))

Training and drugs "key to maternal health"

When pregnant women in Tanzania choose whether to give birth at home or in a clinic, the attitude of health workers and availability of drugs are more important factors than cost and distance to the clinic, a new study suggests. Skilled birth attendants have been identified as crucial in reducing maternal mortality as they are trained to diagnose obstetric complications and manage or refer them, notes the report. In 2004, only 33.6 percent of women living in rural Tanzania reported delivering their last child in a health facility. The maternal mortality ratio in Tanzania is estimated at 950 per 100,000 live births. ([IRIN, September 28](#))

Children push for better schools in South Africa

The new protest movement, with its practical goals, youthful organisers and idealistic moniker, Equal Education, is a quintessentially South African answer to a failing education system, one that self-consciously acknowledged its debt to the past in the march to City Hall. In the 15 years since white supremacist rule ended in South Africa, the governing party, the African National Congress, has put in place numerous policies to transform schools into

engines of opportunity. But many of its leaders, including President Jacob Zuma, now acknowledge that those efforts have too often failed. ([New York Times, September 25](#))

Killing of women, child “witches” on rise, UN says

Aides to U.N. special investigators on women's rights and on summary executions said killings and violence against alleged witch women -- often elderly people -- were becoming common events in countries ranging from South Africa to India. Gary Foxcroft of British-based charity Stepping Stones- Nigeria said children living homeless on the streets in many countries had been driven out by families or communities because they were suspected of being witches. But increasingly children suspected of witchcraft -- usually on the basis of vague accusations -- were being killed because their parents feared they would have to take them back if the authorities identified them. U.N. officials tracking the problem said deaths ran into at least tens of thousands, and beatings, deprivation of property and banishment and isolation from community life meant victims of "witch frenzy" ran into millions. Speakers at the seminar agreed that poverty, exacerbated by the current world economic crisis, often lay behind the phenomenon as people sought to find scapegoats for their misfortunes and the illnesses they suffered.

([Reuters, September 24](#))

Government of Bolivia ‘to ban child labour’

Bolivia will introduce a law to stop children from working under unsafe conditions. The government has identified 10 areas of work, including chestnut collection in the Amazon, mines and sugarcane harvest, where child labour will be prohibited, Labour Minister Calixto Chipana said Monday. The government would later on introduce new policies to allow children who are the sole earner of their families to work in safe environments where their rights are not violated, he added. ([Hindustan Times, September 22](#))