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MEDICINES

Faith Base Organizations, Health Care and Pharmaceutical Services

Contact, the publication of the World Council of Churches has dedicated issue 193 - September 2011 - to Faith Based Organizations: “FBOs on a Mission: 30 years of supporting Pharmaceutical Services”. Faith prompted many Churches to set up institutions to bring health care to those in need, from the smaller church dispensary to the largest pharmaceutical supply agencies. Faith has also led the Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network (EPN) to its 30 years of activity and its celebration in 2012. The magazine presents how to keep an eye on quality aspects, the challenges and difficulties in this task.

http://www.oikoumene.org/fileadmin/files/wcc-main/documents/p4/contact/Contact%20193_EN.pdf

The main diseases affecting Africa - less money and greater need

In recent years, the global HIV/AIDS response has turned a significant corner, with record numbers of people on antiretroviral (ARV) treatment and fewer new HIV infections. But the announcement by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS Tuberculosis (TB) and Malaria that it is cancelling its next funding round has cast a shadow and has highlighted the precarious nature of HIV/AIDS funding. The global economic crisis appears to have put an end to a decade of funding increases by donors; after flattening out in 2009 for the first time, international AIDS assistance fell by 10 percent in 2010. The cost implications are huge, particularly for countries in Africa that rely heavily on money from the Global Fund and foreign donors for these 4 main illnesses. Yet sustainability depends on domestic funding. This is a new “global crisis” that will affect Africa.

<http://www.plusnews.org/report.aspx?Reportid=94354> (in English)

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Promoting community farming techniques and fighting land grabbing

Dennis Garrity has been appointed as a Drylands Ambassador by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). His role is to heighten awareness of land degradation and promote the development of small scale farming in the tropics. In this article, he describes the measures taken by UNCCD and the need for governments to take up such questions as land grabbing, vulnerability to climate change and the loss of biodiversity because of GMOs.

<http://farmlandgrab.org/post/view/19660>

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Howlers and omissions exposed in world of corporate social responsibility

Environment reports by some of the world's biggest companies are routinely including wrong statistics and leaving out vital information, according to the most comprehensive study yet carried out. The examination of more than 4,000 corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports and company surveys by a team at Leeds University found "irrelevant data, unsubstantiated claims, gaps in data and inaccurate figures". "The quality of environmental data in sustainability reports remains appalling at times" said Dr Ralf Barkemeyer, a lecturer in CSR at Leeds and one of the team leaders.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/nov/24/howlers-and-mistakes-in-company-csr-reports>

TRADE

South Africa wants development goal to top agenda at WTO meeting

South Africa will urge member countries of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) not to hijack the development goals of the Doha round at the upcoming Ministerial conference in Geneva, Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies said on Monday. Davies said there was consensus among developing nations in Africa, as well among Brazil, Russia, India and China, that the development agenda as agreed on during the 2001 Doha meeting, must not be compromised in favour of developed countries' interests.

http://www.tralac.org/2011/11/29/sa-wants-development-goal-to-top-agenda-at-wto-meeting/?utm_source=Weekly+tralac+Newsletter&utm_campaign=6221b3caf8-NL20111130&utm_medium=email

CLIMATE CHANGE

Carbon debt for some biofuels lasts centuries

An innovative study by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) has computed how long it would take popular biofuel crops to pay off the "carbon debt" of land conversion. Depending on the type of land that was converted, palm oil would require 59-220 years, while jatropha would require 76-310 years. Biofuels that result in the conversion of natural ecosystems are never going to be emission efficient. On a planet of 7 billion, it's becoming nearly impossible to find available land that fits sustainable criteria.

http://news.mongabay.com/2011/1130-hance_biofuels_debt.html

SMALL ARMS

Concerns for public security as armed expatriates return to Mali from Libya

The Association des Femmes pour les Initiatives de Paix (AFIP), an IANSA member in Mali, is concerned about the deteriorating security situation in the north of the country, as large groups of Malian expatriates return to the country from Libya. They report that some of the returnees worked as mercenaries in Libya and are bringing small arms back into Mali. AFIP calls for urgent government action to prevent outbreaks of violence by detecting and destroying caches of small arms, supporting village leaders and promoting the involvement of women and young people in community work for peace. They also recommend that a hotline should be set up where people can share information and help authorities respond quickly to signs of violence.

http://iansa.org/system/files/AFIP_Note_Mali_Nov11.pdf (in French)

AFRICA

EU policies slowing Africa's development – Report

European Union (EU) policies continue to seriously undermine people's rights, because they are not coherent with development objectives of Africa and other parts of the developing world, a new report has disclosed. The report titled 'Spotlight on EU Policy Coherence for Development, was released by Concord, an umbrella body for over 40 international associations and 1,600 European NGOs. Concord states that the EU fails to comply with its own treaty obligations while dealing with poor countries. Gerard Karlshausen from Concord states: "You cannot deny that European policies have effects overseas, like right here in Africa. Our report shows that European agriculture, trade and migration policies have negative impacts on ACP countries, undermining efforts to reduce global poverty".

Read the full report here:

http://www.concordeurope.org/Files/media/0_internetdocumentsENG/4_Publications/3_CONCORDs_positions_and_studies/Positions2011/Spotlight-on-EU-Policy-Coherence-for-Development-2011.pdf

Analysis: Niger Delta still unstable despite amnesty

Two years after the Nigerian government granted an amnesty to militants fighting mainly for development and job opportunities in the oil-rich Niger River Delta, violence has diminished, and oil revenues - which dropped at the height of the conflict - have increased. But analysts argue that the amnesty programme is flawed and will not lead to long-term peace. In the delta, former fighters are picking up their guns again, and resentment brews among those not included.

<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=94306>