

demic. UNIFEM'S mandate include providing support to national government and the UN system on mainstreaming gender through NACA, SACAs, line ministries, civil society groups, and network of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Ms Lance further noted that the growing global understanding that the HIV/AIDS pandemic is less about infection and more about social factors was false.

According to her, within this context,

Nigerian NGO, 29 others compete for Kyoto World Water prize

As the 4th World Water Forum, the triennial gathering of water stakeholders opens in Mexico City, The Bread of Life Development Foundation, a Nigerian-based non-governmental organization is competing with 29 other finalists for the Kyoto World Water Grand Prize.

The World Water Forum is an initiative of the World Water Council aimed at raising awareness on water issues all over the world. As the main international event on water, it seeks to enable multi-stakeholder participation and dialogue to influence water policy making at a global level, thus assuring better living standards for people all over the world and a more responsible social behaviour towards water issues in-line with the pursuit of sustainable development.

The Kyoto World Water Grand Prize, instituted in March 2003, during the 3rd World Water Forum in Japan, Kyoto City, aims to honour a distinguished individual or organization whose long term and continual activities aims to benefit all citizens by addressing critical water issues in developing countries.

This theme of this first's edition of the Prize is to honor local water actions. Over 500 groups submitted 'local actions' preparatory to the Forum.

The Bread of Life Development Foundation was selected as a finalist for the World water prize, on the strength of its local action, LA03563, titled, "Integrating Pro-poor policies into PPP: Lessons from Nigeria's Water Reform Process", which focuses on its advocacy campaigns over the

past two years, on Nigeria's water reform process. Babatope Babatope, executive director of the foundation, is attending the Mexico Water Forum to exhibit a poster on the local action and he is also expected to make a 10-

minute Presentation. Inviting him to attend the 4th World Water Forum, Colin Herron, and International Relations Coordinator of the 4th World Water Forum said his, participation 'will make a significant difference to the world water cause'.

Health agency launches new 'stop TB' strategy to treat 50 m people

In an effort to reduce the 1.7 million deaths caused by tuberculosis (TB) every year, a new strategy to fight the disease in its varied form has been launched by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The Geneva-based agency said the new initiative underpins the Global Plan to Stop TB 2006-2015, an ambitious \$ 56 billion action plan launched

In January, which will treat 50 million people for TB, halve the disease's prevalence and death rates and save 14 million lives if carried out fully.

In that way, and by creating new partnerships and helping to strengthen health systems, the new strategy is structured to help meet health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - a the set of targets for reducing poverty and other global ills by 2015 - according to Mario Raviglione, Director of WHO's Stop TB Department.

"The Stop TB Strategy aims to ensure

who briefed the participants of objectives of the organization, which was founded in 1988 by General Olusegun Obasanjo, delivered a second welcome address.

The Commissioner for Health in Ogun State, Mrs Iyabo Obasanjo-Belio declared the workshop opened noting that the achievement of a balanced development is dependent on the incorporation of the perspectives of and active participation of women in development process.

access to care for all TB patients, to reach the 2015 Millennium Development Goal for TB and to reduce the burden of TB worldwide," Dr. Raviglione affirmed.

The strategy, he said, builds on the TB-control approach known as DOTS, promoted by WHO to treat over 22 million patients since 1995, while also targeting the combined TB/HIV and drug-resistant MDR-TB strains of the disease.

"DOTS remains central to TB control," he said. "But with DOTS programmes now established in 183 countries, the new Stop TB Strategy injects new energies to make efforts more comprehensive and effective."

The Stop TB Strategy, detailed in the 17 March issue of the Lancet medical journal ahead of World TB Day on 24 March, was developed during a consultation process involving international health partners over a two-year period.

Below is a report filed by Benedikt Haerlin of Greenpeace International who is in Curitiba, with links to some initial reports and responses to the decision.

Mr. Haerlin said: "It was with relief but mixed feelings that the delegates and observers of the Biosafety Protocol meeting in Curitiba welcomed a last minute agreement on the contentious issue of identification and documentation of international shipments of GMOs in food, feed and for processing. After 4 days of intensive negotiations, which went into 6 a.m. in the morning of Friday in the 'friends of the chair' drafting group and lasted until 8 p.m. in the plenary a deal was found that does improve the previous interim provisions but fall short of what the large majority of countries wanted. The last watering down of the text, orchestrated by the US and industry, was carried out by Mexico and Paraguay."

Greenhouse gases reach highest level ever recorded

Globally averaged concentrations of carbon dioxide (CO₂), the most abundant greenhouse gas in the planet's atmosphere, as well as of methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O), reached their highest ever-recorded levels in 2004, mainly due to human activity, the United Nations meteorological agency has announced.

CO₂ increased by 1.8 parts per million (ppm) to 377.1 ppm, or 0.47 per cent compared with 2003, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) reported in its first annual Greenhouse Gas Bulletin. The 35 per cent rise in CO₂ since the dawn of the industrial age in the late 1700s has largely been generated by emissions from the combustion of fossil fuels.

"Global observations coordinated by WMO show that levels of carbon dioxide, the most abundant greenhouse gas in the atmosphere, continue to increase steadily and show no signs of levelling off," said Michel Jarraud, Secretary-General of the Geneva-based agency.

In contrast, atmospheric levels of methane, at 1783 parts per billion (ppb), have shown signs of reaching a plateau with virtually no rise in 2004 and changing by less than 5 ppb per year since 1999.