

UN INDIA DIGEST

News and updates from the 26 entities of the UN Country Team



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Young asylum-seekers show off their dance moves on World Refugee Day: Photo: UNHCR

Boosting incomes of Jammu & Kashmir farmers

The International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Government of Jammu and Kashmir have launched a partnership to improve the competitiveness and climate resilience of local farmers under a \$217.2 million programme. Spanning all 20 districts, the Competitiveness Improvement of Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project in Jammu and Kashmir will benefit 1.5 million people by promoting climate-smart, market-driven farming practices. It aims to introduce sustainable agricultural methods, encourage diversification into high-value crops tailored to the region's climate, and expand areas for niche and horticultural crop cultivation.



Photo: IFAD

Taking health care to remote Meghalaya villages



Photo: WHO/Sanchita Sharma

In the remote village of Kenmysaw in northeastern state of Meghalaya, heavy rains cut off residents for months, but public health services are taken directly to them by the state Government with support from the World Health Organization. Each month, a health team led by a doctor treks for hours to provide free check-ups, medicines, and vaccinations, especially important for mothers and children. They also tackle local health issues, promote institutional deliveries, and essentially bring crucial health-care services right to their doorstep, providing vital care for maternal health and managing diseases like hypertension.

Artificial reefs revitalize fish stocks in Gulf of Mannar

The UN Development Programme is deploying artificial reefs in Tamil Nadu's Gulf of Mannar biosphere reserve to tackle problems of overfishing and climate change. These reefs create havens for marine life, attracting fish and allowing natural reefs to regenerate, thereby reviving fish populations, increasing income for fishers, and ensuring a more sustainable future for the area's marine ecosystem.



Photo: UNDP



Photo: YuWaah

UN to help 5,000 young women acquire digital skills

Young women in select smaller cities and underprivileged communities across India will receive free training in essential digital skills under a new partnership between YuWaah at UNICEF and the not-for-profit organization, NIIT Foundation. The initiative aims to empower more than 5,000 individuals with these skills by the end of 2024 and will be delivered through the Passport to Earning platform, which currently serves learners across India and is expanding in three districts in Odisha and two districts in Jharkhand.

Chit Chaat

Click to watch *Chit Chaat*, a new video series of conversations about how the United Nations in India is working on the ground to make a difference. In this episode, UNHCR India Chief of Mission Areti Sianni and Resident Coordinator Shombi Sharp talk about the contributions refugees make to their host communities.



Photo of the month



Photo: WHO/Rajiv Solanki

Yoga mats make their way to New Delhi's Lodhi Garden as India marks the 10th International Day of Yoga.

Resilience in focus on World Environment Day

"Our actions are pushing the planet to the brink," UN Resident Coordinator in India, Shombi Sharp said at the World Environment Day celebrations led by the UN Environment Programme in New Delhi, as record-breaking temperatures worldwide fuel fears of a triple planetary crisis. This year's World Environment theme of land restoration, halting desertification and building drought resilience "resonates deeply with the government's efforts to restore ecosystems," said Sujit Kumar Bajpayee, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Young environment champions showcased sustainable alternatives to plastic – like life jackets made of plastic bottles to help individuals in flood-prone areas and turmeric-dyed yellow cloth bags under the banner of the Tide Turners Plastic Challenge, the world's largest youth-led movement that has seen participation from over 500,000 youth across India so far. Click here to also watch a special conversation involving UNEP Goodwill Ambassador Dia Mirza and UNDP India Youth Champion Sanjana Sanghi on ways to restore our common future.



Photo: UNIC



Photo: UNIC



Photo: UNICEF/Magray

Transforming Rajasthan's water landscape

In response to severe water crisis brought about by climate change, UNICEF worked with women in Rajasthan as agents of change. A long-dormant village pond was revived with the help of Jal Sahelis ("Water Friends") to provide clean water access for the entire community. The initiative has now been extended beyond immediate relief, helping women with knowledge of sustainable water management practices; and empowering them to build community resilience against future droughts towards safeguarding the well-being of countless residents.

Helping young people design healthy cities

Youth participation is key to an inclusive future. A recent two-day training programme in Odisha, jointly organized by the World Health Organization and UN-Habitat with contributions from the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, empowered young people to advocate for healthy cities through the Young Gamechangers Initiative. This initiative, a global programme, implemented by UN-Habitat and WHO with funding from the Fondation Botnar, included sessions where participants worked together to discuss and identify key health issues in their community. They examined factors affecting health, explored the impact of public spaces on well-being, and discussed how young people can contribute to creating healthier cities.



Photo: UN Habitat



Photo: ILO

Empowering migrant women workers

Migrant women workers aspire to decent work, yet their choices are limited due to gender norms and a lack of decent work opportunities. The International Labour Organization's Work in Freedom programme reached out to aspiring and returned migrant domestic workers in South Asia to promote mobility with choice and worked with trade unions and policymakers to ensure decent working conditions at their destinations, aiming to prevent trafficking and forced labor conditions.



Photo: UNICEF

Through soccer, young women score life goals

Young talented female footballers supported by NGOs Slum Soccer and Cequin India showcased their skills and gained valuable life lessons at an inspiring match in New Delhi. The event, titled "Women in Sports: Breaking Barriers," was held as part of EU Gender Week and co-organized by UN India, UNICEF, the embassies of Belgium and the Netherlands, and the All India Football Federation.



Women for peace

Major Radhika Sen, who served with the UN peacekeeping force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is the UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year. Watch an extended conversation between the Indian peacekeeper and UN Resident Coordinator in India Shombi Sharp about her award and her work to empower communities in DRC.



27,000 schoolchildren learn about health, climate

Students in Uttar Pradesh are becoming champions of environmental change through a groundbreaking initiative by the UN Office for Project Services and TERI, which aims to tackle climate change, health, and hygiene issues. This six-month campaign closely aligned with the goals of Mission LiFE (LiFEStyLe For Environment) educated students on water conservation, menstrual hygiene, and climate change, empowering them to spread awareness in their communities. The National Conference on Climate Change Awareness, Health, and Hygiene in Schools saw participation from government officials, ambassadors, and UN representatives. At the conference, students from 11 districts shared their experiences and were recognized as Student Climate Champions for their critical role in building a sustainable future.



Photo: UNIC



Prevention the cure amid alarm at rising drug use

UNODC is calling for evidence-based prevention programmes to ensure that communities – and especially young people – are equipped with the knowledge, behaviors and support to avoid drug use. Presenting the findings of the annual World Drug Report in New Delhi, UNODC's regional chief Marco Teixeira said it showed that drug use has escalated worldwide over the past decade. National Commission for Protection of Child Rights Chairperson Priyank Kanoongo also underlined the need to protect the most vulnerable communities.

Women farmers eye new fields as climate champs

Policymakers, experts and farmer representatives from across India offered insights on expanding women farmers' access to land, inputs, training, and government schemes at a symposium organized by the Royal Embassy of Norway and the UN World Food Programme. The symposium heard how social norms affect women farmers and limit their access and opportunities. WFP and the Embassy of Norway in India plan to hold other symposia in 2024 to highlight women farmers' role in building climate resilience.



UN News Hindi: Monthly highlights



Plastic pollutes fisheries, aquaculture, and agriculture. Tackling it throughout the production chain is crucial for sustainable food systems. [Click here](#) for more engaging and solution-oriented content drawn from India.



At a glance

11 July: World Population Day

8–17 July: High-level Political Forum (HLPF) at UN Headquarters in New York

15 July: World Youth Skills Day

18 July: Nelson Mandela International Day

21–31 July: India to chair UNESCO World Heritage Committee meeting in New Delhi

28 July: World Hepatitis Day

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