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2023 State of Climate Services for Health Companion Document

Summary for decision-makers to address gaps in climate science and services for health

Fueled by climate change, more frequent extreme weather events and drastic environmental changes have a fundamental impact on human health and well-being.

Tailored climate products and services can serve as a powerful part of the public health toolkit – enhancing our ability to detect, monitor, predict, and manage climate related health risks.

Among other targets, the draft COP28 Declaration on Climate and Health calls for improving the ability of health systems to anticipate, and implement adaptation interventions against, climate-sensitive disease and health risks, including by bolstering climate-health information services, surveillance, early warning and response systems and a climate-ready health workforce.

The 2023 WMO State of Climate Services for Health Report and the WHO-WMO Implementation Plan for Advancing Integrated Climate, Environment and Health Science and Services (2023-2033) outline the current gaps and barriers that must be urgently addressed to enhance the climate resiliency of the health sector.

The following summary outlines critical investment areas to address the gaps in Climate Science and Services for Health.

WEATHER CLIMATE WATER

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION | World Health Organization

JOINT OFFICE FOR CLIMATE AND HEALTH

FINANCE GAPS

Addressing the finance gaps in creating and applying climate services for health necessitates a multifaceted approach.

Diverse financing approaches must be explored, spanning the realms of climate, hydrometeorological services, and health financing mechanisms. This cross-cutting strategy ensures a comprehensive response to the challenges at hand. Moreover, **enhancing coordination and fostering the active involvement of various stakeholders**, including philanthropic funders, private investors, and financial mechanisms, is paramount. The synergy among these actors can yield innovative solutions and increased financial support.

To attract investments while mitigating risks, **blended finance models** that fuse public and private funds should be embraced, providing a solid foundation for climate services in the health sector. **Integrating climate action into public-private partnerships within the health sector** can unlock additional financing opportunities, while developing **National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) that prioritize health and include costed health interventions** can strategically allocate resources.

Finally, **mainstreaming climate adaptation and mitigation into national and health sector development plans, budgets, and annual planning cycles** is essential, leveraging existing financial resources and facilitating access to bilateral and global finance. These steps collectively fortify the financial framework required to effectively address the intersection of climate services and health.

CAPACITY GAPS

Addressing capacity gaps in creating and applying climate services for health begins with **developing in-country capacities**, focusing on enhancing local knowledge through the collection of epidemiological, climate, and socio-economic data.

Equally crucial is **fostering institutional interaction with policymakers** to ensure the effective integration of climate data into health decision-making processes. **Raising awareness among various stakeholders** about the significance of climate information for climate adaptation and resilience is essential. This includes educating policymakers and other relevant actors about the technical requirements and investment gaps associated with climate services for health.

Another critical step involves **nurturing a cadre of professionals who have undergone transdisciplinary training in climate and health**, empowering them to collaborate with a diverse range of partners across sectors.

Finally, **improving the climate literacy and transdisciplinary communication skills of meteorological, climate, environment, and health professionals** is vital. This includes equipping them with the ability to utilize innovative tools and platforms to effectively communicate with the public, ensuring that climate services for health are accessible and comprehensible to all.

RESEARCH, ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING GAPS AND PROGRESS

Addressing assessment and monitoring gaps around climate services for health demands a strategic approach. Firstly, **establishing a systematic process to identify and respond to research and impact monitoring gaps and knowledge priorities** between health, climate, and other sciences is essential. This ensures that interdisciplinary collaboration remains at the forefront of addressing these challenges.

Additionally, **assessing the readiness of partners to co-produce climate analytics, services, and projects that are tailored to the specific needs of the health sector** is crucial. This collaborative approach fosters the development of fit-for-purpose solutions. **Standardizing data processing procedures and providing support mechanisms for interoperable and quality-controlled information pipelines** is indispensable, as it enhances the decision-making process and ensures data reliability.

Efforts should be made to **enhance climate change impact and attribution science and develop mechanisms for assessing and monitoring climate impacts on health**. This will deepen our understanding of the relationship between climate and public health, ultimately improving response strategies.

Enhancing the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the performance, effectiveness, and cost-effectiveness of climate services with respect to people's health and health systems is vital. This connection back to policy and system outcomes helps refine health vulnerability and adaptation assessments, Integrated Surveillance Systems, and climate-informed Early Warning Systems, thereby strengthening the resilience of health systems in the face of climate-related challenges.

INSTITUTIONAL AND COLLABORATION GAPS

Addressing barriers to collaboration in the development and application of climate services for health requires a concerted effort to foster synergy among diverse stakeholders. **Creating platforms for open dialogue and communication** is essential, ensuring that experts from the fields of climate, health, and other related disciplines can exchange knowledge and expertise.

Establishing interdisciplinary teams and encouraging the co-production of climate services tailored to the specific needs of the health sector can break down silos and stimulate collaboration.

Promoting awareness about the interconnectedness of climate and health, and the benefits of their collaboration, among policymakers, healthcare professionals, and the public is vital. Building trust among stakeholders is also crucial, and this can be achieved through **transparent data sharing and mutually agreed-upon frameworks for collaboration**. These efforts can be further supported through policy mandates and coordination mechanisms as all operational and institutional levels.

Finally, **fostering a culture of cooperation** through capacity-building initiatives, joint research projects, and incentivizing collaboration in funding schemes can incentivize greater cooperation and innovation in addressing the complex challenges at the intersection of climate services and health.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRANSFORMATION

1. Mainstream climate change adaptation and mitigation into national and health sector development plans, budgets, and planning cycles to leverage existing resources and facilitate access to finance.

2. Join-up donor collaboration between climate and health funders to maximize alignment of resources, and insure health investments are climate-informed, and climate investments are health sensitive.

3. Enable policy mandates for health and meteorological actors to collaborate and share data and projects, with data processing standards and support mechanisms for interoperable and quality-controlled pipelines of information to enhance decision-processes;

4. Create in-country capacity through transdisciplinary job training programmes and fellowships which cross-train and employ professionals to navigate both climate and health sciences.

5. Conduct climate-service readiness assessments of partners and projects to ensure feasibility and enhance outcomes of climate-informed health policy and programming.

6. Expand health partnerships and projects with experts in climate-science and meteorology, and employ good practices for the co-production of climate-services for heath.

7. Harness advances in digital technologies to enable data sciences to accelerate access and use of critical climate and health information.

8. Standardize and develop enhanced metrics for monitoring climate impacts on health and wellbeing, and invest in mechanisms to track and synthesize changing risks, progress, and gaps.

9. Strengthen institutions by expanding mandates, capabilities and expertise to develop climate and health sciences and operational services.

10. Invest in mechanisms and spaces that promote climate literacy, communication skills, and knowledge brokering that will build bridges between the public, multi-disciplinary science, and policy communities.

ABOUT US

The World Health Organization (WHO) and World Meteorological Organization (WMO) are working together to advance integrated climate and health sciences and services to better protect human health from climate change, extreme weather and climate, water, air quality, solar radiation, and other environmental hazards.

By working together, WHO and WMO are strengthening, harmonizing and leveraging resources and opportunities to empower and support Member States and partners through interagency cooperation.

The Implementation Plan for Advancing Integrated Climate and Health Science and Services 2023–2033 outlines innovative approaches, sustained mechanisms, and engagement opportunities that we will be working toward to deliver demand driven climate science and services for health protection.

To get involved, contribute, or collaborate please contact:

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