FORECASTING HEALTHY FUTURES GLOBAL SUMMIT

FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION

JUNE 18-21 2024 • BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

The global climate agenda has understated the impact of global warming on human health. As a result, inadequate investment has been made in life saving solutions and climate-resilient healthcare systems for the future. Similarly, our growing understanding of climate's impact on health has not been captured and communicated in a way that could help build broad engagement and accelerate global progress in phasing out fossil fuels.

The second annual Forecasting Healthy Futures Global Summit offered a critical opportunity to engage global stakeholders and advance the climate and health movement, alongside the COP29 leadership team as they finalized their agenda for this year's UNFCCC conference in Azerbaijan. The event brought together — in Baku and virtually — a diverse group of more than 270 leaders and experts representing 200 organizations and more than 45 countries, representing governments, the private sector, NGOs, global finance institutions, higher education, UNFCCC, and COP29.

This year's Summit showcased insights and updates on adaptation innovations from a variety of fields and disciplines, examined global progress making climate financing more readily available where needed, explored ways to sway minds through strategic communications and emotive storytelling, and considered tactics to move health toward the center of climate negotiations through targeted advocacy. The event also featured the first-ever public multi-COP presidency conversation about health on the climate agenda, including senior representatives from 5 COPs.

HIGH-LEVEL SPEAKERS INCLUDED:

- **Vanessa Kerry**, CEO, Seed Global Health, WHO Envoy for Climate and Health
- **Maria Neira,** Director, Dept of Environment, Climate Change and Health, WHO
- **Yalchin Rafiyev**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chief Negotiator of COP29
- **Marina Romanello**, Executive Director, Lancet Countdown
- **Laksmi Dhewanthi**, Director General for Climate Change, Government of Indonesia
- **Peter Sands**, Executive Director, the Global Fund
- **Cecilia Kinuthia-Njenga**, Director, Intergovernmental Support and Collective Progress, UNFCCC
- **Michael Charles**, CEO, RBM Partnership to End Malaria
- **Majid Al-Suwaidi**, Director-General of COP28
- **High-level COP representatives** from COP26, COP27, COP28, COP29, and COP30
- **Dr. Nadir Zeynalov**, Deputy Minister of Health, Azerbaijan

SESSIONS THROUGHOUT THE 3-DAY SUMMIT COVERED:

+ Perspectives on past and present opportunities to include health in the COP agenda

+ Climate financing for health

+ Building a climate-resilient health workforce

+ Climate-sensitive infectious diseases

+ Solutions to address the impacts of health on climate

Throughout three days of provocative keynote presentations, and a diverse array of transdisciplinary panels from the fields of humanitarian assistance, agriculture, mental health, WASH, finance, and more... one profound conclusion clearly emerged. **It is time to take the climate and health movement beyond the health sector itself and recognize health for what it is: a cross-cutting rationale for urgent climate action, the connective tissue that binds all sectors as one, and the outcome by which all mitigation and adaptation efforts should be evaluated.**

This summary of the Summit's sessions is intended to reinforce that conclusion and other important themes, through select quotes and synopses. Recorded sessions are available to view in their entirety at fhfsummit.org.

270	45	200	1 MILLION
leaders in attendance	**countries represented**	**organizations represented**	**people reached on social media**

It is time to take the climate and health movement beyond the health sector itself and recognize health for what it is: a cross-cutting rationale for urgent climate action, the connective tissue that binds all sectors as one, and the outcome by which all mitigation and adaptation efforts should be evaluated.

The FHF Global Summit was funded through sponsorships by:

REACHING the LAST MILE · aws · psi · malaria NO MORE

DAY 1 SUMMARY

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS FROM WHO

"The health argument for climate action is stronger than ever."

- MARIA NEIRA, *Director, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health, WHO*

The World Health Organization kicked off the FHF Global Summit, with a pre-recorded welcome from Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, and live remarks from Dr. Maria Neira.

Dr. Tedros reaffirmed WHO's commitment to working with partners around the world to address the health impacts of climate change, and emphasized the importance of preparing the health workforce dealing with climate-related shocks on the front lines.

During Dr. Neira's remarks, she unpacked the significance of the Climate and Health Resolution recently passed at the 2024 World Health Assembly, asserted that next critical steps include ensuring that Nationally Determined Contributions integrate health considerations at their core, and that the commitments made in Dubai lead to real increases in available financing for climate adaptation to protect the world's most vulnerable populations.

PERSPECTIVES FROM AZERBAIJAN AND COP29

"The concrete and measurable potential of climate commitments to protect the lives, health, and wellbeing of the global population can be a powerful benchmark of progress and will motivate further action."

- YALCHIN RAFIYEV, *COP29 Chief Negotiator, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Azerbaijan*

Yalchin Rafiyev addressed FHF Global Summit participants in Baku on Tuesday, in a keynote address that highlighted the ways Azerbaijan's "Health and Human Capital" initiative will give voice to people and communities at the forefront of the climate crisis… from humanitarians to indigenous people to climate scientists… and those driving and implementing climate solutions. He asserted that COP29 will demonstrate how health can motivate climate action and insist that new investments be made where they will have the greatest impact.

REFLECTIONS FROM UAE AND COP28

"COP28 and the UAE consensus proved that multilateralism can still work for the benefit of all people and our planet, even at a time of high geopolitical tension."

- MAJID AL SUWADI, *COP28 Director-General, United Arab Emirates*

HE Majid Al Suwadi, COP28 Director-General, joined the Summit virtually and reminded the audience that he attended the inaugural FHF Global Summit, where he announced the first ever COP Health Day and he is encouraged by how far the community has come and the leadership exhibited over the last year.

INSIGHTS FROM THE LANCET COUNTDOWN ON HEALTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE

"The health sector is our first line of defense against the impact of climate change."

- MARINA ROMANELLO, *Executive Director, Lancet Countdown*

In a keynote address to ground Summit participants in the current realities of climate change and its impact on health, Dr. Marina Romanello stressed that climate change is impacting nearly every health metric monitored. She pointed out that just 17.7% of the US$1.16 billion of 2022 Green Climate Fund financing supported projects with potential health benefits, showing there's a long way to go before health is integrated into every aspect of climate change response.

FORWARD FROM FINDINGS

"The problems are complex and the solutions must cross disciplines and ministries, but if multi-sector collaboration isn't someone's job... it falls apart. You need an instigator."

- LAURA HERMAN, *Partner, Dalberg*

After a lecture from distinguished Professor Jonathan Patz of University of Wisconsin-Madison on the health benefits of decarbonization efforts in other sectors, Laura Herman and Aravindan Srinivasan unpacked the complex interactions that determine both climate and health outcomes, argued that most countries are unprepared to look across sectors to understand and address the many indirect pathways through which climate change impacts health and wellness, and discussed the kind of research that is most likely to persuade policy makers to invest in the right places and protect vulnerable populations.

PROFILES IN CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Throughout the Summit, we shared a series of videos showcasing solutions and stories from the ground, where the realities of climate change are experienced first-hand. This series features individuals and their stories of resilience from around the world, bringing us closer to the front lines of the response to climate change impacts, illustrating the many ways global warming is affecting human health as we aim to amplify the voices of the champions and innovators who are driving regional solutions.

RELIEF, RECOVERY, AND PEACE IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

"This is fundamentally an issue of equity. When we prevent, everyone benefits everywhere."

- NEIL VORA, *Policy Fellow, Conservation International*

Climate shocks have an especially disruptive impact in fragile or conflict-affected states, and humanitarian organizations must respond to these disasters around the world in increasingly complex settings. This session's panelists discussed the cumulative impact of multiple climactic events on communities' ability to recover, cope, and to remain resilient, and agreed that an emphasis on planning and prevention is the best strategy to deal with the uncertainties... and that technology advances are making that process more feasible than ever.

NEW APPROACHES TO BUILDING A CLIMATE-READY HEALTH WORKFORCE

"It might not be time to add new content to core curricula, but rather start by being more innovative with the technology tools we already have today."

- HANDE HARMANCI, *WHO Representative and Head of Country Office, Azerbaijan*

The health workforce in many vulnerable settings is often under-funded, under-trained, and under-resourced, but a strong and well-prepared workforce may be one of the most important components of climate resilience. This session explored how various technologies can be leveraged to address new impacts of global warming. Panelists argued that what we already knew was needed with the overburdened health workforce is doubly true now in the context of climate change... we must align education with the population needs and strengthen continuing medical education.

NEW ADVANCES IN WATER ACCESS AND SAFETY

"We view WASH as a basic human right — not a privilege. We know that we can't have healthy populations without ensuring that we have basic access to water, sanitation, and hygiene."

- **HAMZAH SARWAR,** *Global Social Impact and Partnerships Director, Reckitt*

Water availability and safety have obvious implications for human health, but protection from the threats posed by climate change relies on action from a very different set of actors, and hasn't been addressed at the levels and with the urgency warranted. Panelists discussed a collection of interventions and investment priorities ranging from regional derisking to cost-effective tools like chlorination to private sector stewardship and social entrepreneurism.

FOOD SYSTEMS, FOOD SECURITY, AND THE UNDERLYING HEALTH OF A POPULATION

"Food systems are the elephant in the room, that somehow goes unnoticed. Too often health conversations are dominated by health sector thinking."

- OLIVER CAMP, *Environment and Food Systems Advocacy Advisor, GAIN*

Prolonged and more frequent drought, extreme and unpredictable rainfall, and global conflict at an unprecedented scale have all contributed to an instability in food production, but threats to population nutrition also stem from the homogenization of food sources. This session explored solutions ranging from forest preservation to crop diversification to waste reduction in the value chain, and argued that if we take more coordinated, more coherent, more synergistic action on climate and health together, we can achieve much more than when we work on these two things in isolation.

DAY 2 SUMMARY

UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE

"A key part of our shared challenge is moving discussions of health outside of the health sector itself, and instead into the mainstream of climate negotiations and our response."

- VANESSA KERRY, *CEO, Seed Global Health, WHO Envoy for Climate and Health*

Dr. Vanessa Kerry opened the second day of the FHF Global Summit with a stirring call to action, focused on the need to increase understanding of how climate change-induced health issues affect multiple sectors, to drive collective action. By continuing the momentum from COP28 into COP29 we can use this opportunity to galvanize funding, protect and invest in human capital, incorporate health into climate change negotiations, and integrate health into all aspects of climate change. "There is no way to speak of our future," said Dr. Kerry, "without recognizing our health and wellbeing and how they lie at the centerpiece of everything."

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO GREENER AND MORE EQUITABLE CITIES

"There is a really strong case to be made for those tough political choices and changes, and it can be made very, very effectively by bringing it back to peoples' health, children's health and their wellbeing... all of the things that we all agree we care about, whatever political system or environment we live in."

- ROBERT HUGHES, *Principal Investigator, Children, Cities and Climate Action Lab, LSTMH*

The technical sessions on Day Two began with an overview of new solutions to the quickly emerging challenge of extreme urban heat. Dr. Eleni Myrivili, UN-HABITAT Global Chief Heat Officer and panelists argued for a more systemic approach to urban resilience, that moves beyond just health infrastructure to engage innovators and stakeholders within the sectors of electricity, transportation, water, and telecommunications. Panelists explored the research and implementation science needed to ensure that nature-based, technology, and social solutions are routinely planned and budgeted.

TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN CLIMATE AND HEALTH FINANCE

"Health has been lost in the hindsight of climate change discussions. One of the barriers to health being mainstreamed is the way we operate in siloes... even within the health sector, but particularly siloed from animal health, environmental health, and other sectors."

DINESH ARORA, *Principal Health Specialist, Asian Development Bank*

"The Government of Indonesia considers climate change... as an integrated concept that is essential for building resilience, safeguarding food, water, energy... as well as health."

LAKSMI DHEWANTHI, *Director General for Climate Change, Indonesia*

Increased awareness and new resolve are promising to make sharply increased financing available to countries who need it to respond to current and future climate threats. This series of conversations featured Indonesian ministerial representation from both climate and health sectors, along with leadership from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Reaching the Last Mile, and the Global Fund. The discussions all reinforced the need to work across sectors of the economy in defining the problem, devising solutions, accessing finance, and monitoring progress.

REFLECTIONS ON DONOR PRIORITIES FROM THE GATES FOUNDATION

"With cutting edge, transformative solutions, we can not only address these challenges, but also build a more resilient, healthy future for all."

- **PAULIN BASINGA,** *Director, Africa, Gates Foundation*

CLIMATE CHANGE AND MENTAL HEALTH

"Part of mental health resilience building even in the face of a warming planet is to ensure that we create and sustain healthy societies where people enjoy basic rights, have access to resources for living, thriving, and flourishing."

- **RENZO GUINTO,** *Associate Professor, National University of Singapore*

Panelists from a range of institutions from Columbia University to the United Nations discussed mental health in the context of climate change and how integrated policies are needed to address the rising levels of climate anxiety, PTSD, and other consequences of global warming.

BUILDING A MOVEMENT VIA STORYTELLING AND MEDIA PARTNERSHIP

"In this complex daily crisis that people are facing, building campaigns takes a lot of collaboration, a lot of cross-sectoral conversations... because I don't think there's any one sector that can really influence change itself."

- **SHWETA NARAYAN,** *Climate and Health Campaigner, Healthcare Without Harm*

Climate change can feel abstract and like a future problem. Panelists in this session discussed the ways in which health brings people and sectors together around the climate imperative, if emotive storytelling is done well. Broadcasters, journalists, and media producers discussed the ways that they shed light on real people, making it personal, and getting close enough to capture their narrative and their emotions in a way other people can understand. With strong characters, scenes well set, and stories that take the viewer on journeys... storytelling can impact the kind of broad all-of-economy engagement we need for urgent action.

COP29 AND BEYOND

"Health is a cross-cutting issue, and therefore it crosses across all areas of adaptation and mitigation, and should not be difficult to insert... indeed, we have data to show that we have seen growth in terms of the impact that health advocacy is having on the process."

- CECILIA KINUTHIA-NJENGA, *Director, Intergovernmental Support and Collective Progress, UNFCCC*

Panelists explained that despite the fact that the recent momentum at the intersection of climate and health has happened in the climate action space, and is not really a formal part of the negotiations agenda, collective advocacy has already influenced the UNFCCC process to a great extent. At a time when the next specific steps to insert health in core negotiations are unclear to many, the discussion focused on ways to create health metrics that extend beyond the health sector, and instead are used to evaluate the impact of everything else that is accomplished.

DAY 3 SUMMARY

INSPIRING URGENCY: MALARIA ELIMINATION EFFORTS IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE PRESSURES

"I challenge all of us to expand our thinking and networks beyond health, to collaborate with others in the climate space."

- **DAVID WALTON,** *US Global Malaria Coordinator, President's Malaria Initiative*

SPOTLIGHT ON CLIMATE-SENSITIVE DISEASE

"People are moving from rural areas into urban areas to have better economic opportunities, better lifestyles, better access to infrastructure... and the places they're occupying are places where mosquitoes are proliferating. That puts them at really great risk for several diseases."

- WILLIAM PAN, *Professor, Duke University*

This session's panel discussed challenges and opportunities in managing climate-sensitive infectious disease, with a particular focus on dengue. Academic leaders, government officials, and others all agreed that data is fundamental to any effective response or intervention. New and upcoming vaccines, as well as novel biotechnologies like Wolbachia, all offer hope for disease elimination efforts, but cooperation across ecosystems, across sectors, and throughout regions is also essential to any sustainable progress against vector-borne disease epidemics that will continue to grow and change within the context of climate change.

CONTINUITY DIALOGUE

"In our list of initiatives indeed there are complementarities between initiatives. On the one side we have climate-resilient and healthy cities, on the other hand we have climate-smart villages, which complement each other on the topics of health, food, and agriculture."

- **ELMAR MAMMADOV,** *Action Agenda Team Co-Lead, COP29*

This groundbreaking panel brought together representatives from the World Health Organization and five past, present and future COP Presidencies, to discuss the evolution and advances of the health agenda within the climate change conference. Panelists from the Brazil, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, and United Kingdom reflected on what's most needed to build on the momentum created in the leadup to COP28 and the financial commitments that were made in Dubai. COP29 Leadership from Azerbaijan resolved to keep this dialogue open and invited suggestions and ongoing collaboration to ensure forward progress.

PERSPECTIVES 2024

Opinions on climate and health from participants of the FHF Global Summit

FORECASTING HEALTHY FUTURES GLOBAL SUMMIT

Forecasting Healthy Futures invited participants of the 2024 Global Summit to share their thoughts on its key themes in the days following the event. This companion piece to the 2024 Global Summit Summary Report is intended to capture just some of the many diverse views and opinions expressed by Summit participants over the course of the 3-day event.

The opinions contained in this report are not necessarily those of Forecasting Healthy Futures. Submissions are included in their original form, with only minor editing for clarity.

Perspectives were invited across four major topics:

+ Climate & Health Financing

+ Solutions for Climate-Resilient Health Systems

+ Storytelling & Advocacy

+ Health Sector Contributions to Mitigation organizations

CLIMATE & HEALTH FINANCING

Climate change has different effects on different population types. Women experience the huge burden of climate change especially due to their duties at home. They also frequently visit health facilities due to various reasons, such as injuries from gender-based violence, SRHR, MCH (pregnancy and giving birth, taking their children for immunization), and other health-related issues.

Women's voices need to be incorporated in all decision making. I believe women's perspectives on climate change and health financing is critical and inherent in women's issues.

How do the power differences and inequities between men and women play a role in accessing health services? This question could guide the thinking about health financing, e.g. who carries the heavy burden of accessing health care services. Gender plays a role in the effect of climate change and health services access and hence needs to be considered in health financing and climate policies.

GRACE GICHUNA, GBV and Gender Technical Officer, LVCT Health

"Climate & Health Financing." This topic addresses the intersection of climate change impacts on public health and the financial mechanisms needed to mitigate and adapt to these challenges. It involves exploring how investments and funding can be allocated to protect public health from climate-related risks, such as extreme weather events, vector-borne diseases, air pollution, and food insecurity. Additionally, it involves examining the role of financial institutions, governments, and international organizations in mobilizing resources effectively for climate-resilient health systems and sustainable development. This topic is timely and critical in shaping policies and strategies that promote both environmental sustainability and public health outcomes globally.

MR. ISAIAH AYUGI, Programs Officer, Saidika Organization

According to the WHO: Climate change is directly contributing to humanitarian emergencies from heatwaves, wildfires, floods, tropical storms, and hurricanes and they are increasing in scale, frequency, and intensity.

Research shows that 3.6 billion people already live in areas highly susceptible to climate change. Between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year, from under-nutrition, malaria, diarrhoea, and heat stress alone.

The direct damage costs to health (excluding costs in health-determining sectors such as agriculture and water and sanitation) is estimated to be between US$ 2–4 billion per year by 2030.

Against this background, I am proposing that the decision-makers at COP29 in Azerbaijan consider creating the 'Climate and Health International Emergency Fund' (CHIEF). Essentially, this facility will be the maiden global unified financial facility and system that is dedicated to supporting the international response to this slowly emerging but fast degenerating twin-challenge of the 21st century. Functionally, the CHIEF will also improve coordination and prudence in the management of the currently disjointed climate-health funding mechanisms.

ASTON MWILA KUSEKA, The SDG3.5Keeper, Innovations Consultant, Aston Kuseka Innovations

Enhanced funding for the health sector and improved access to existing climate funding sources are vital.

Multilateral climate funds must offer specific guidance for health-related investments and involve more health organizations as accredited funding entities. Evaluations should be carried out to determine the financing needs for climate and health, available funds, gaps, and opportunities to obtain additional resources.

Collaborative climate and health investments, like the newly established Climate and Health Co-Investment Facility, can help draw in public and private capital to advance climate-resilient, sustainable, and low-carbon health systems in susceptible countries.

Private sector investments play a fundamental role in financing climate and health initiatives, particularly in supporting the most vulnerable countries and communities in addressing climate change. Mobilizing private capital on a large scale is essential to meeting these financing requirements.

Furthermore, increased public climate finance should accompany private-sector financing, and urgent action is needed to mobilize adequate, accessible, and equitable climate and health financing from all sources.

IRADA KHALILOVA, Professor, Khazar University

Establish a most vulnerable countries list affected by climate change and a transparency mechanism on distribution of money among vulnerable countries.

DR. GULSHAN AKHUNDOVA, WDFPU

SOLUTIONS FOR CLIMATE-RESILIENT HEALTH SYSTEMS

Along with fighting climate change, it is necessary to strengthen adaptation mechanisms. The primary goal is to make every health sector employee aware of climate change and its effects. If medical personnel understand these issues, they can take timely, appropriate action and propose solutions. Medical help is also needed for natural disasters and extreme heat. A special group of doctors from each specialty should be created and prepared both psychologically and intellectually for these situations.

Climate change affects food security, economic problems, and human health. Addressing issues like healthy nutrition, lifestyle, and the availability of nutrient-rich, natural products at affordable prices is essential. Nutritionists, agricultural experts, and the media have significant roles to play. Proper use of fertile land and determining the food needs of the population are crucial. Promoting seasonal nutrition is also important. Historically, each season had its fruits and vegetables, but now we can get any produce year-round, often with fewer nutrients. Growing fruits and vegetables seasonally, despite the large population, is beneficial. An Azerbaijani saying, “Let it be little, but let it be good,” supports this and could reduce the need for greenhouses.

Promoting an active lifestyle is also key. In Azerbaijan, individual agriculture is declining as more people move to cities. Retirees, instead of living passively at home, could manage their own farms in suburbs and villages. The book “Ikigai” by Hector Gracia and Frances Millaris highlights this as a secret to Japanese longevity. Retirement marks the end of official work, but activity must continue. This approach can address food, a healthy lifestyle, and healthcare issues, even if only slightly.

In conclusion, Earth is our shared home, regardless of borders, religion, race, or language. We should work together and share experiences related to positive outcomes for a healthy, green world!

NATAVAN IMANZADE, AzerMDS

I have seen first-hand, working over the last 8 years in complex economies like Haiti, Liberia, and Somalia, that it is not only possible, but it is profitable, to build climate-resilient nutritious low-cost food systems, with food that is rooted in cultural norms while being designed for 2024.

TAYLOR QUINN, Executive Director, Tailored Food

Youth organizations play a crucial role in shaping the future of climate-resilient health systems. Their perspectives emphasize education, sustainability, innovation, interdisciplinary approaches, and equity. As the first non-profit medical and healthcare youth organization of Azerbaijan, we aim to implement training programs and educational resources on climate resilience and health in medical curricula. Because it is a crucial topic for all youth and if they have awareness about related topics, we can increase engaging student numbers. Nowadays, Azerbaijan works on a green economy and energy, and as AzerMDS, we also devise to promote the use of renewable energy and green infrastructure in healthcare facilities. The most impactful and crucial step is advocacy at national and international levels. By integrating these solutions, health systems can better prepare for and respond to the challenges posed by climate change, ensuring healthier and more resilient communities for future generations. Our next projects are open to all stakeholders and organizations.

NAILA AHMADOVA, AzerMDS

Resilience is flexibility, and flexibility is the capacity to innovate in implementation coupled with good data. Supporting countries, especially LMICs, in building better data collection capacity and conducting more implementation studies is crucial.

ARNON HOURI-YAFIN, CEO, ZzappMalaria

Addressing climate resilience in health systems in developing countries requires a multifaceted approach rooted in systems thinking, involving significant investments and integration into health adaptation strategies. Systems thinking involves understanding the complex interconnections within a system, considering how climate change affects health determinants and outcomes, and how health systems interact with sectors like water, sanitation, agriculture, and infrastructure. Developing countries face health risks from climate-related events like floods, cyclones, and heatwaves, which can increase vector-borne diseases, waterborne diseases, and malnutrition, and lead to mental health issues.

Challenges include the lack of health integration in climate adaptation strategies, limited resources, and infrastructure vulnerability. Solutions include climate-proofing health facilities, strengthening supply chains, promoting cross-sector collaboration and community-based approaches, training health workers, public awareness campaigns, enhancing disease surveillance and early warning systems, advocating for health inclusion in climate policies, and investing in research and data. These measures help health systems better respond to climate change, protecting vulnerable populations.

DR. BYOMKESH TALUKDER, Assistant Professor, Florida International University

Health systems need to be prepared for extraordinary demands given the exponential surge in climate related natural hazards. Investment in human resource professional capacity building for healthcare provision and preventive care is critical to respond optimally to escalation of both communicable and non-communicable diseases, injuries and potential mass casualties, and mental health trauma and anxiety. Integrating climate threats into the MOH emergency preparedness framework including risk management capacities, surge response plans, pre-positioning of supplies, drugs and equipment is essential. Management of pharmaceuticals and supplies, such as cholera kits, interagency emergency health kits (IEHK), and trauma and emergency surgical kits (TESK), is part of the pre-positioning plan in areas at risk of natural disasters. Early warning systems and forecasting models are required to inform planning for disease outbreaks such as cholera, dengue,and malaria.

Building community resilience through fostering local leadership, enabling first responders, and ensuring vital information and sensitization on the climate hazards and risk mitigation can foster greater self-reliance and mass mobilization of communities in the event of a major disaster.

Coordination with UN-led clusters, including WHO and national authorities (MOH, rural development and other), and with civil society partners to contribute and advance whole of society engagement. Community engagement through existing community social and health development structures and investing in local first responder networks is essential and a priority in all contexts at risk while training LNGOs on climate capacities and response/preparedness/risk reduction creates a multi-tier and lasting legacy.

ANN CANAVAN, Senior Director, IMC

In Forecasting Healthy Futures Global Summit, I noticed a consensus across the discussions that climate-resilient health systems are pivotal in climate change adaptation and mitigation to ensure healthy and sustainable futures.

Health systems depend on multiple streams of resources, politics, and governance. The healthcare workers create the frontline and work as a connection. The priority should be the capacity building of the healthcare workforce, which includes engaging, knowledge sharing, collaborating, and training to bring knowledge and research at grassroots levels. That means taking global best practices to local levels in managing healthcare systems to help them in early warning, adaptation, research, surveillance, green healthcare practices, policy integration, and community engagement. All of them will require motivated and trained healthcare workers, including physicians and nurses at all levels, from the grassroots to the top management in health ministries.

The scenario is still gloomy in the global south, especially in geographically challenging and sensitive localities like mountains, which are facing the brunt of the health consequences of climate change. Frontline healthcare workers, physicians, and nurses working with limited resources and a staff shortage are often overburdened, making it challenging to maintain their motivation in localities where it is required most. It may require incentivizing in all possible ways to motivate the healthcare workforce to take climate change and health issues seriously and attract them through innovative capacity-building initiatives, training opportunities, and policies.

With my long experience as a clinician and public health consultant, I can say our healthcare systems, especially in the global south, are lacking in this significantly essential and priority issue. So, I believe it should be the top priority in the list of multiple solutions for climate-resilient health systems.

DR. MAHESH BHATT, MMBSHS Trust

Priorities should include:

- *Integration of climate solutions in country health policies, while tackling climate change.*
- *Supporting research and innovations in climate-resilient health solutions in the most affected global south countries.*
- *Promoting international cooperation and knowledge sharing on climate-resilient systems.*
- *Establishment of robust health surveillance systems to monitor climate-sensitive diseases and health outcomes.*
- *Supporting capacity building and training of health workers to respond to climate-related health risks.*
- *Mobilization of finance and investments in climate-resilient infrastructure for healthcare facilities.*

WALTER OSIGAI ETEPESIT, CEO, Walton Africa Waste Company

While being the "main cause of climate change," cities are also the most affected, but cities can also offer a part of the solution. Given their role as hubs of innovation and creativity, we should look to cities to provide us with answers for more efficient energy, transportation and building sectors, smarter planning solutions and land uses that have the potential to deliver major emission cuts. It is imperative that we incorporate climate change in urban planning to address inequalities and social exclusion in cities by rethinking their form and function – but above all how to provide equitable access to services.

Climate-responsive urban design, intentional policies, focused strategies, and nature-positive plans can contribute to cleaner air, better water quality, safer transportation, and improved disease prevention measures. On the other hand, poorly planned urban expansions are increasing the carbon footprint of our cities. Low-density suburban sprawl and informal neighborhoods coupled with inefficient public transportation systems, poor infrastructure and homes far from work and shops means more cars on the roads emitting carbon dioxide. We also need to apply zoning regulations and control mechanisms that restrict development in high-risk areas, such as floodplains, coastal zones, riverbeds, steep hillsides prone to landslides etc., particularly because these are often the areas where the poorest households are most likely to live.

While there has been an upsurge of local-level climate action in recent decades, led by mayors and local governments, we need to see stronger support by national governments and adequate policies. In UN-Habitat, we strongly encourage the collaboration between urban planners and experts in health, education, renewables, transportation, and environmental management, to obtain cohesive and comprehensive strategies that support climate-resilient urban development, ensuring that policies align at local, regional, and national levels.

ANNA SOAVE, Head of Azerbaijan Programme, UN-Habitat

Climate-resilient health systems are crucial for addressing challenges posed by climate change. While health has been identified as a priority sector in all National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) submitted to the UNFCCC, actions often fall short of fully addressing components needed for truly resilient systems. Four key actions, alongside other solutions, have been identified to bridge this gap:

- *Understand Health-Related Vulnerabilities: Conduct comprehensive assessments of health system vulnerabilities to climate change, including risks from vector-borne diseases and extreme weather events.*
- *Foster Integrated Approaches: Promote collaboration between health sector actors, coordinating ministries, and related sectors to align adaptation plans with national strategies.*
- *Secure Adequate Resources: Allocate substantial funding for health adaptation actions, combining various sources and targeting resources effectively.*
- *Monitor, Evaluate, and Adjust: Implement robust systems to track the effectiveness of adaptation efforts and health impacts of climate change, allowing for continuous improvement.*

Additional essential solutions include:

- *Comprehensive Planning: Incorporate health considerations into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Health Vulnerability & Adaptation Assessments (V&As), and Health National Adaptation Plans (HNAPs) to identify and address climate-related health risks effectively.*
- *Climate-resilient Infrastructure: Invest in healthcare facilities that can withstand extreme weather events.*
- *Effective Governance: Establish climate and health committees at national and inter-ministerial levels to streamline efforts and foster collaboration.*
- *Monitoring: Implement surveillance systems and early warning mechanisms for climate-sensitive diseases, enabling timely responses.*
- *Community Health and Equity: Strengthen community health systems, ensuring equitable access to healthcare and prioritizing vulnerable populations, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and women.*

DALIA HASHWEH, Associate Programme Officer, UNFCCC

The growing impact of climate change on health, due to increased scale and frequency of extreme weather events, rising air pollution, changing patterns of food, water, and vector borne diseases, socially mediated effects like food insecurity resulting in undernutrition, occupational heat stress, mental illness, population displacement, migration and poverty disproportionately affect primarily the vulnerable populations putting strain on already stretched health care systems especially in most low and middle-income countries. The latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) finds that the scientific evidence is unequivocal, climate change is a threat to human wellbeing, and climate risks are appearing faster and will become more severe sooner than previously expected.

A robust health care system, climate and health awareness, climate change mitigation, emergency preparedness and response, innovation and research along with strategic and synergistic financing are crucial towards key solutions for climate-resilient health system. Strong governance and climate leadership, supported by evidence-based policy, collaborative approach, partnership with different stakeholders and active community involvement are essential prerequisites.

Real-time monitoring and surveillance system at the interface of health, climate, socio-economic, demographic and other relevant data linkage incorporating newer technologies will provide evidence-base for advocacy and support integrated risk monitoring and early warning to detect and respond to potential climate health threats and strengthen organizational structures and capacity to address health outcomes involving both health and non-health sectors. A holistic and systems approach seems essential to solutions for climate-resilient health system. Contextually relevant solutions for climate-resilient health system will promote sustainability, empower community and ensure equity for sustainable human development.

DR. PRABIR KUMAR SEN, Former Additional Director-General, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and Director, National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme, India

In Tanzania, Traditional Medicine is experiencing a renaissance. It is formally recognized, integrated into mainstream health care with established practitioners, and is drawing growing interest from various sectors. Evidence suggests that Traditional Medicine promotes bioactivity conservation, safety, and domestication on the homestead. The traditional way of knowing and learning systems in indigenous communities is cross-generation wisdom kept by Elders and Women as a tool for climate resilience mitigation, health and well-being, livelihood improvement, and a source of conflict resolution and family building on peace and harmony. This is due to indigenous communities' cultural and traditional beliefs in sacred plants and traditional health care systems as primary health services, which have an impact on lifestyles due to limited access to conventional health care systems. There are specific learning grounds (traditional colleges) to transfer this knowledge to the youth, namely OLOIKAR and Emanyata. Furthermore, plant species are used to forecast weather conditions during prolonged droughts, providing a clear weather status that promotes transhumance, or the movement of indigenous communities and their livestock to new areas in search of pastures and water. The rotation movement of indigenous communities also contributes to the increase of millions of tons of CO2 in the soil via grasses, i.e., carbon credit offsets. ILIOT promotes ecosystem-based approaches and biodiversity conservation of herbal and sacred tree plants can reduce the vulnerability of communities to climate change.

JOSEPH LOURE OLE PARMELO, Founder & Director, Indigenous Livelihood Innovation Organization Team (ILIOT)

Climate change is a global public health crisis that is disproportionately affecting African women and children. As an African primary health care organisation serving vulnerable communities in 11 sub-Saharan African countries, mothers2mothers (m2m) is already seeing its impacts—cholera education is now an important part of our work in Zambia in light of recent floods, HIV and TB services are often disrupted by extreme weather events, and an increasing body of evidence highlights climate-related risks to maternal and child health.

Compounding this, communities with under-resourced health infrastructures—like many in sub-Saharan Africa—are least able to prepare for and respond to climate-related health issues. At m2m, we believe that people closest to challenges are best-placed to lead solutions—that's why our model is peer-based, local, and delivered through paid, professional community health workers (CHWs). m2m trains and employs local African women as CHWs who work door-to-door in their communities and at health facilities to ensure everyone, everywhere has the opportunity to be healthy. Since 2001, we have trained and employed over 12,000 CHWs who, together, have reached more than 16 million people with life-changing health services.

While the future impact of climate change on health is unknown, we believe that communities—and CHWs—must be heard, supported, and trusted as key actors in the response. We will continue to raise our voices with governments and policy makers to inspire investment in more paid, professional CHWs, increasing the resilience and responsiveness of health systems and ensuring that solutions are tailored to the individual and community level. The lived experiences of the people we serve across sub-Saharan Africa are central to understanding the human impact of the climate crisis on health, so we will continue to tell their stories to increase urgency and hold governments and policy makers to account.

MOTHERS2MOTHERS

As a member of Land Body Ecologies network (Invisible Flock), we'd like to emphasize the crucial link between culture, climate, and health in future discussions.

In 2022, UNESCO's Mondiacult Declaration outlined the link between culture, sustainability, and health, inviting the UN to incorporate culture as essential to work towards sustainable health and development. This was reinforced during the 2023 World Health Assembly, where WHO member states adopted a resolution recognizing the cultural and social identity of Indigenous peoples as vital for their rights and quality of life. Environmentally, the culture, environment and health link is evident in Indigenous communities, many of whom have a close connection with the land. Indigenous Peoples make up about 5% of the world's population, yet actively steward 80% of the planet's biodiversity. However, climate change poses a significant threat to their health and wellbeing.

Decision makers should:

- *Encourage public health practitioners, climate researchers and policy makers to adopt a broader understanding of health, including culture for climate-adaptive healthcare systems.*
- *Recognise the value of transdisciplinary in sharing expertise, co-producing knowledge, and offering diverse approaches to climate and health adaptation. Creative collaborations can highlight alternative and marginalised perspectives of environmental trauma. Cultural engagement through art can promote powerful story sharing and community resilience.*
- *Acknowledge healing possibilities for both human and environmental health by viewing the body as part of nature and considering experiences of Solastalgia—mental distress from environmental changes at home.*
- *Recognize culture's role in mental health discussions, and the importance of traditional knowledge, cultural identity, and social connections for climate-adaptive healthcare systems. Culture, as a human right, should be integral for environmental and climate change, especially for Indigenous communities.*

NQATYISWA MENDU, Engagement and Communications Coordinator, Land Body Ecologies (Invisible Flock)

STORYTELLING & ADVOCACY

Using effective strategies and digital technological tools and approaches for storytelling and advocacy would be a powerful combination for driving change.

By utilizing appropriate tools and methods alongside impactful storytelling techniques, nonprofit organizations and advocacy groups have the potential to develop impactful initiatives that can motivate action and bring about significant transformations.

Compelling storytelling can capture emotions by creating personal connections between the audience and the story's subject. It can also use digital tools such as social media, websites, and emails to present clear messages and authentic expressions, moving beyond superficial engagement and fostering genuine involvement.

DR. IRADA KHALILOVA, Rector, Khazar University

Humanizing climate change through storytelling can influence public opinion and drive policy and behavioral change. When policymakers and the public see the human side of climate impacts, they are more likely to support and enact measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change. For example, a compelling story about a community successfully implementing renewable energy solutions can inspire others to advocate for similar policies in their regions.

DR. DANCAN OKAKA, Director, Saidika Organization

Storytelling is a powerful tool in advocacy, capable of transforming complex data into relatable narratives that resonate with diverse audiences. At the 2024 Forecasting Healthy Futures Global Summit, the role of storytelling in climate and health advocacy was underscored as essential for driving meaningful change. As we approach COP29, it is crucial to harness the power of storytelling to influence Azerbaijani decision-makers and inspire stakeholders.

Personal stories of individuals and communities affected by climate change and health crises humanize the data, making the issues more tangible and urgent. These narratives bridge the gap between abstract statistics and real-life impacts, fostering empathy and a deeper understanding of the challenges faced. By highlighting the lived experiences of those on the frontlines, we can create a compelling case for immediate and sustained action.

Moreover, storytelling in advocacy is not just about sharing stories but about listening and amplifying voices that are often overlooked. This inclusive approach enriches the discourse, leading to more equitable and effective solutions.

In Azerbaijan, storytelling can play a pivotal role in shaping the health agenda for COP29. By presenting compelling narratives from our own communities, we can highlight the urgent need for climate action and its intersection with public health. These stories can motivate policymakers to prioritize health in climate discussions and allocate resources to mitigate the impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations.

In conclusion, storytelling is a critical component of advocacy that can drive significant impact by making the invisible visible and the unheard heard. As we prepare for COP29, let us leverage the power of storytelling to advocate for policies that safeguard our health and environment, ensuring a sustainable and equitable future for all.

EMIL ISKANDAROV, Assos, Prof., The Administration Regional Medical Divisions – TABIB

Food systems are a thread linking multiple climate, nature, health, and socioeconomic outcomes.

Under the NCQG, there should be a sector-specific goal for agrifood systems. More broadly, climate finance must intentionally and explicitly seek out health co-benefits. NDCs and NAPs must include costed actions to protect and promote health, especially through access to nutritious, safe diets.

Cross-ministerial engagement is the new frontier. We propose COP29 should host the first 'Cross-Ministerial', on health, involving all ministries responsible for food, water, climate, energy, and health (including social protection).

The Presidency could offer dedicated passes for farmers, indigenous peoples, and youth.

And the roundtable identified some clear 'action areas' supported by the participants:

- *Improve planning and support for farmers, including early warning systems and weather forecasts*
- *Address the commercial determinants of health (economics and incentives): the need to ensure that healthy and sustainable food is affordable for consumers and also profitable for producers*
- *Create stronger standards for more healthy and sustainable food, with labelling, and support producers to achieve those standards…*
- *…while also addressing the 'food culture' to make these foods more desirable and marketable*
- *Prioritise local production of locally appropriate foods for local consumption, prioritising dietary diversity, indigenous foods. Develop FBDGs and use for public procurement.*
- *Invest in food infrastructure to cut food loss and waste and improve access to nutrition*
- *Strengthen short-term response to shocks of climate change, conflict, and associated disruptions*

Key initiatives to collaborate with include:

- *COP27 Initiative on Climate Action and Nutrition (I-CAN)*
- *COP28 Technical Cooperation Collaborative (TCC)*
- *UNFSS School Meals Coalition*

Key events on the road to COP29 include:

- *High-Level Political Forum*
- *African Food Systems Forum*
- *Summit for the Future*
- *UNCBD COP16*

OLIVER CAMP, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition

Echoes of Resilience: Climate Health Advocacy in Kibera

Kibera, Nairobi's largest informal settlement, faces severe challenges due to poverty, overcrowding, and inadequate infrastructure. Climate change exacerbates these issues, causing health crises and environmental degradation. Dancan Okaka, a dedicated advocate and community leader, has been using storytelling and advocacy to address climate health in Kibera. This summary captures his efforts and their transformative impact on the community.

The Power of Storytelling: Storytelling is a vital part of African culture, serving to educate, inspire, and unite people. Dancan Okaka harnesses this tradition to raise awareness about climate health in Kibera by sharing compelling narratives that resonate with residents' experiences.

Personal Stories and Community Engagement: Dancan gathers and shares personal stories from Kibera residents affected by climate change. These narratives illustrate the direct impact of climate issues on health. For example, Mary, a mother of three, lost her home to floods, leading to a cholera outbreak in her neighborhood. Stories like Mary's create empathy and urgency, mobilizing the community to take action.

Advocacy for Climate Health: Dancan's advocacy focuses on addressing the root causes of climate-related health issues in Kibera. He collaborates with local organizations, government agencies, and international NGOs to drive systemic change.

Community Clean-Up Initiatives: Understanding the link between waste management and health, Dancan organizes regular community clean-up events. These initiatives reduce pollution, prevent disease outbreaks, and foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among residents. By involving schools, youth groups, and local businesses, Dancan ensures widespread participation and sustainability of these efforts.

DR. DANCAN OKAKA, Director, Saidika Organization

As a virtual delegate at the recently concluded Forecasting Healthy Futures Global Summit, I am immensely proud to have witnessed the powerful inclusion of stories from all over the world, even third-world countries. These narratives highlighted real situations on the ground and played a major role in the conference program.

The "Climate and Us" series was particularly captivating, provoking thought and critical thinking through the use of videos and narration. This series effectively served as a high-level advocacy tool. The seamless integration of serious panel discussions with these short videos ensured that the messages resonated deeply with the audience.

Notably, the panelists themselves reinforced climate and health messages by sharing personal experiences and discussing real-time projects and interventions at the grassroots level. This is also a story telling approach that made the conference truly unique and impactful.

I am excited to apply the newly acquired storytelling skills to combat malaria in Kenya, localizing the messages to create more impactful outcomes. I eagerly look forward to the COP29 engagement in November.

MURIITHI BENSON, Head of Resource Mobilization and Partnership, Kenya Malaria Youth Corps

HEALTH SECTOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO MITIGATION

It's critical that the growing climate and health movement also express explicit support for natural climate solutions (such as protecting tropical forests), which are critical for both climate change mitigation and adaptation.

NEIL VORA, MD, Senior Advisor, One Health, Conservation International

I was particularly inspired by the discussions around the quantified health benefits of climate actions in the sanitation, transportation, urban planning, and agriculture and nutrition fields. Examples of engaging the private sector in these fields make it clear we are at the cusp of finding scalable solutions to addressing climate change. Over and over again, across the panel discussions, it became clear that climate solutions are health solutions, and health interventions can be climate solutions. I came away motivated and re-invigorated. Let's get to work driving health improvements through climate action.

JULIA M GOHLKE, PhD, Lead Senior Scientist, Environmental Defense Fund

Healthcare waste contributes to climate change through various mechanisms, primarily due to emissions generated during treatment and disposal.

Healthcare waste management in Baku involves several strategies to ensure safe disposal and minimize environmental impact. However, there is no united waste management system in Azerbaijan. Healthcare waste management varies from one healthcare setting to another. According to the professionals, there is a big gap in management of waste generated in hospitals and clinics.

A comprehensive plan can be created that outlines procedures for waste segregation, collection, transportation, treatment, and disposal. Healthcare facilities should separate waste into categories such as infectious, chemical, pharmaceutical, and non-hazardous. Some healthcare settings utilize the waste in their way, incinerate or put into the containers with other wastes. Incineration of healthcare waste produces carbon dioxide (CO_2) and, in some cases, nitrous oxide (N_2O), both potent greenhouse gases.

Waste incineration can reduce waste volume and generate energy. Modern incinerators are designed to minimize emissions and can convert waste to heat or electricity

The healthcare sector can significantly reduce its contribution to climate change by addressing these areas while maintaining effective waste management practices. Healthcare waste contributes to climate change through various mechanisms, primarily due to the emissions generated during its treatment and disposal processes.

ELCHIN MUKHTARLI, Chairman, Saglamliga Khidmat Public Union, NGO