



# Health and Climate Change

## Global Programme Adaptation to Climate Change in the Health Sector

### Act now to protect the right to health

Climate change endangers the livelihoods of billions of people and poses a serious threat to global health in the 21st century. It undermines the fundamental right to health, especially for population groups living in geographically or socio-economically disadvantaged situations. Changes in the climate affect human health in different ways and can strain already weak health systems. Extreme weather events such as heatwaves and storms have obvious impacts. However, climate change also causes a wide range of indirect health hazards. These include food and water shortages and shifts in the geographic distribution of pathogens and carriers of disease (e.g. malaria and dengue). A change in thinking is needed at both national and international level: Health systems and communities need to become more climate-resilient to be able to timely and adequately react to the consequences of climate change.

### Towards climate-resilient health systems

The global programme “Adaptation to Climate Change in the Health Sector” is implemented by the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). It supports the development of innovative climate change adaptation measures for the health sector and promotes national and international discourse on health related issues of climate change.

In Cambodia, Burundi, Malawi and the Philippines pilot projects together with partners are implemented with concrete adaptation measures at national and local level. The generated experiences and lessons learnt furnish the pro-

gramme’s technical input at the national and international policy level.

Project name	Adaptation to Climate Change in the Health Sector
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Global
Lead executing agencies	Ministries with responsibility for health, the environment, water and climate change, German development cooperation programmes and international organisations
Overall term	1 April 2013 – 30 June 2017

The programme works at different levels and cooperates with a variety of partners. Activities comprise:

- Collaborating with the **World Health Organization (WHO)** at international and regional level
- Establishing **networks** by bringing together different actors from the political and administrative spheres, from civil society and from the research community
- Supporting **partners** at national and local level **in African and Asian countries** in developing concrete adaptation measures
- Integrating the topic into ongoing **bilateral german development cooperation projects**



*L.t. r.: Common domestic water source.  
Local risk mapping, both pictures taken in  
SiamReap province, Cambodia.*

## Success stories and results

**Climate-resilient health systems:** Climate change places new demands on health systems. In the province Siem Reap in Cambodia, the programme is working together with *Malteser International* and the provincial health authority to increase the resilience of the local health system and to reduce the vulnerability of local communities to the adverse effects of climate change on health.

**Policy advice:** The programme supports the governments of Grenada, Cambodia and Burundi in integrating measures to protect health from negative impacts of climate change into national policies, strategies and relevant planning processes.

**Vulnerability and adaptation analyses:** Vulnerability and adaptation analyses are a precondition for needs-oriented adaptation planning, addressing health hazards, environment-derived and social vulnerabilities as well as adaptation needs in the health sector at both national and local level. In cooperation with the *WHO*, the programme supports African countries in conducting *national* vulnerability and adaptation analyses.

At the *local* level, vulnerability and adaptation assessments were carried out in Siem Reap province, Cambodia and in the cotton-growing region of Chikwawa in Malawi. Results from these analyses were used to develop suitable measures to increase local awareness on climate sensitive diseases.

**Strengthening the international dialogue on climate change and health:** To foster awareness and action at international level, the programme organises key contributions at international conferences. These include strategic events such as *Climate and Health Summits*, which take place during the *United Nations Climate Change Conferences*.

**Capacity building and training:** The programme supports trainings on climate change related health risks and adaptation measures for government representatives, opinion leaders, health care staff and civil society. In the Philippines, for example, the programme teams up with *German Red Cross* to produce suitable training materials for the general public and medical personnel.

To increase capacity at regional and national level the global programme supports several initiatives of the *WHO* including updating of training materials for ministries of health and environment and the analysis and publication of lessons learnt in the field of climate change adaptation for health.

In 2014, prior to the *Climate Change Conference* in Lima, a range of training activities have been organized together with the *United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)* to prepare delegates from African and Asian countries.

Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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As at January 2016

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