Global conference sets health action agenda for the implementation of the Paris Agreement

Participants attending the Second Global Conference on Health and Climate, hosted by the Government of France, COP21 presidency, proposed key actions for the implementation of the Paris agreement to reduce health risks linked to climate change. The health action agenda is a contribution to COP22, under the Presidency of the Government of Morocco, in Marrakech in November 2016.

The conference called for countries to adopt a new approach to link health economics assessment and climate change, by calculating the health-care costs avoided when countries invest in measures to mitigate climate emissions and protect against climate risks. The conference recommended that countries spend more on protecting health from risks linked to climate, such as extreme weather events and outbreaks of infectious disease, and in cleaner energy sources, more sustainable transport systems, and urban planning that also reduces major health risks. Recommendations also focus on scaling up financing on climate change and health through additional resources and mechanisms and by using existing resources earmarked for adaptation. To develop this work, WHO announced the establishment of a working group which will articulate a new coherent approach to health economics and climate change.

Click here to read the full conference conclusions. Click here for other background information about the conference. Read Bike the Talk blog. Watch the video: Breathe Life: clean air healthy future.

WHO launches Health in All Policies Trainers platform

Following the launch of a Health in All Policies (HiAP) training manual in 2015, WHO provided a series of training events in collaboration with regional and national capacity-building institutions to strengthen capacity and to increase cooperation among policy-makers in health and other sectors to reduce health inequities. Further to this, WHO has developed a Health in All Policies trainers’ platform to facilitate the growth of institutions and trainer networks by sharing information based on regional and national common concerns and experiences. The platform, framed within the 2030 SDG agenda practical implementation efforts, is a repository comprising all the necessary resources (content, technical documents and preparatory training materials) from previously organized trainings, as well as a database of certified HiAP trainers and experts. To access the platform, click here.

The next training event on HiAP will be held from 18 to 22 July 2016 in Santiago, Chile where the platform will be launched officially. The training event will bring together managers and technicians responsible for planning, programming and implementing health programmes at national or local levels. The aim of the training event is to address how to improve health equity and tackle social determinants of health in development programmes and to use HiAP as a strategy to strengthen health programming.

Environment and health for European cities in the 21st century: making a difference

By 2030, it is estimated that 80% of Europe’s population will be living in urban areas. With rapid ageing and migration to cities, the urban environment will become the principal environmental determinant of health and well-being. WHO Regional Office for Europe organized a meeting to explore how the European Environment and Health Process can support implementation of relevant Sustainable Development Goals and targets by establishing new forms of collaboration to address these issues. The meeting provided opportunities for developing partnerships at sub-national levels of governance focusing on policy domains such as local transport, housing, land-use planning, green areas, local infrastructures for water and sanitation, waste management and local measures for adaptation to and mitigation of climate change. The meeting also highlighted how inequalities can be reduced and the physical and social resilience of communities enhanced. The meeting brought together representatives of cities and local authorities, intergovernmental organizations, agencies and Member States and was held from 27 to 28 June 2016 in Bonn, Germany.
Measuring and monitoring action on the social determinants of health

Under the 2011 Rio Political Declaration on the Social Determinants of Health (RPD) WHO Member States have pledged to take action to improve health equity. WHO and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) organized a technical meeting to review and make recommendations on the proposed measurement domains and core indicators for the WHO monitoring framework in response to pledges of the RPD. The vision of social determinants of health (SDH) focused monitoring is to support the sharing of countries experience and strengthening of national monitoring capacities. This involves developing useful information resources on current monitoring systems and international norms and standards related to SDH-focused monitoring systems. WHO will also facilitate networks of Member States and technical experts who are operating or establishing SDH action and broader SDH-focused monitoring systems.

The monitoring framework was developed by WHO in collaboration with PHAC, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research – Institute of Population and Public Health (CIHR-IPPH) and the Working Group for Monitoring Action on the Social Determinants of Health. The meeting was held in Ottawa, Canada from 20 to 22 June 2016. For further information, click here.

AirQ+: a tool to quantify health impacts

Air pollution is the largest single environmental health risk and a leading cause of disease and death globally through its impacts on the cardiovascular and respiratory systems. World-wide, exposure to ambient air pollution accounts for 3.7 million deaths per year in addition to 4.3 million deaths attributable to household air pollution.

To support experts, policy-makers and stakeholders from health and other sectors in tackling air pollution, WHO Regional office for Europe has released AirQ+, updated software to quantify the health impacts of air pollution in a given population. Based on recent scientific evidence, AirQ+ is relevant worldwide and can be used for any city, country or region. The estimates generated by AirQ+ are the starting point to develop or adjust policies and measures that protect people’s health. AirQ+ is part of the WHO response to the requests made in a landmark World Health Assembly Resolution on air pollution (2015). The Resolution asked WHO, inter alia, to provide tools that assist decision-makers at all levels of government in addressing the health impact of air pollution. For further information, click here and here to download AirQ+

GLAAS 2016 survey launches with a focus on finance

The UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation (GLAAS) and Drinking-Water is pleased to announce the launch of the 2016 country survey. GLAAS monitors the enabling environment (in terms of laws, plans and policies, institutional and monitoring arrangements) and inputs (in terms of human resources and finance) for the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector at the regional and global levels. The survey has been updated to reflect the Sustainable Development Goals and has a focus on WASH financing. Data from the survey will be used in the 2017 GLAAS report that will be launched early in 2017 prior to a Sanitation and Water for All High-Level Meeting in April 2017. For further information, click here.