



PHM ESA INTERNATIONAL PEOPLES HEALTH UNIVERSITY (IPHU)

"Health Systems Strengthening in the midst of Climate Change and Health Emergencies"

15<sup>TH</sup> – 18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2025



KAMUZU UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES (KUHS), LILONGWE, MALAWI





## Info Brief



**Event: PHM ESA International Peoples Health University (IPHU) 2025**



**Theme: "Health Systems Strengthening in the midst of Climate Change and Health Emergencies"**



**Venue: Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHS), Malawi**



**Dates: 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

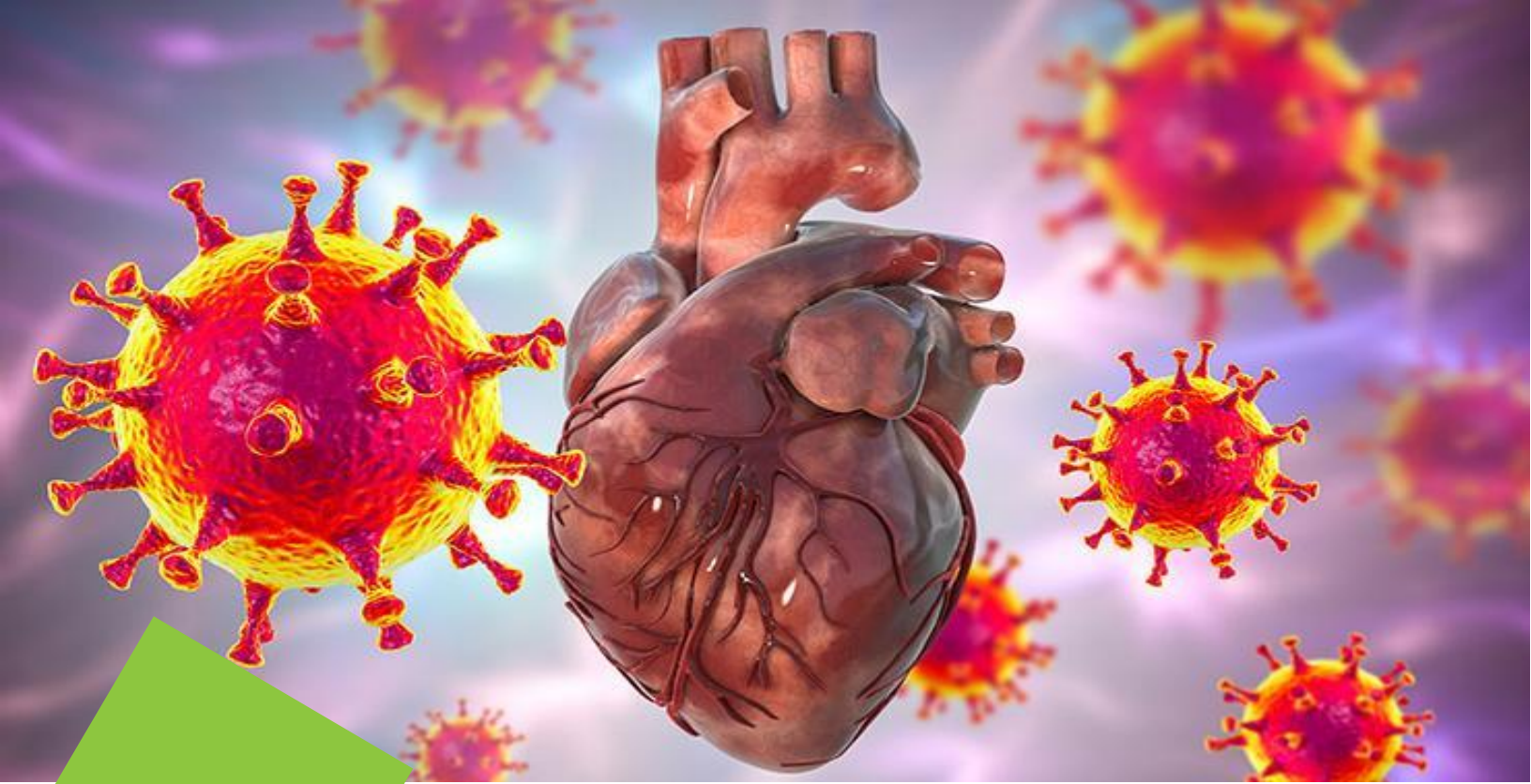


**Participating Countries: 16 Countries from Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA)**



**Other Programmes: ~ PHM ESA 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations**

**~ PHM ESA Global Health Watch 7 Launch**



# Climate & Health Emergencies



The African Region reports the heaviest burden of public health emergencies globally and health systems are failing to deal with their impacts. Climate-related health emergencies are on the rise in Africa, accounting for more than half of public health events recorded in the region over the past two decades.



Changing climatic conditions in Africa are increasing heat-related illnesses and deaths; changing the patterns of infectious disease transmission, making deadly disease outbreaks and pandemics more likely; worsening maternal and child health outcomes; and intensifying health impacts from extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, wildfires, and windstorms. It further shows how Climate change is exerting significant strains on and overwhelming health systems in Africa, simultaneously increasing demand for health services whilst also impairing the system's ability to respond.





# Climate, Health and Poverty



The climate crisis is also rapidly deteriorating access to basic human needs such as food security, safe drinking water and sanitation, and clean air. Africa is also grappling with other significant health impacts linked to climatic shocks including malnutrition and hunger due to adverse weather on agricultural production, long-term health and development challenges in children, as well as other infectious diseases such as malaria. By 2030, climate's negative health effects could drive 40M people into extreme poverty. The result, according to new World Bank data, is that a warmer climate could lead to at least 21 million additional deaths by 2050 from just five health risks: extreme heat, stunting, diarrhea, malaria, and dengue. Results reveal that between 2001 and 2022, a total of 2234 public health events have been recorded in the WHO African Region of which 1886 events (84.4%) were substantiated and 102 public health events reported yearly during the last 22 years time frame. Unabated climate change is also expected to make the global goal of poverty reduction even more challenging to reach. A recent World Bank study estimates that climate change may push an additional 132 million people (more than half of whom live in Sub Saharan Africa and South Asia), into extreme poverty by 2030, with 44 million of these driven by health impacts. Climate change impact is also likely to slow the progress against hunger, with an additional 78 million people in Africa facing chronic hunger by 2050, according to the study.



# Climate and Health Financing



Climate and climate-induced health emergencies finance in Africa is characterized by a large and widening funding gap, with demand for \$1.1 trillion by 2030 far exceeding the available funds, and a significant portion of the international finance flowing as debt rather than grants. African countries face challenges accessing multilateral funds, despite having substantial domestic capital potential. Innovative approaches such as green bonds, Sovereign Green Bonds, and SDG Eurobonds are emerging, alongside initiatives like the African Development Bank's climate finance facilities, to bridge the gap and promote green energy and adaptation.

## Key Challenges



### **Widening Funding Gap:**

The climate financing needs for Africa are immense, with estimates showing demand could reach \$1.1 trillion by 2030. However, current funding is insufficient, and the gap is expected to widen as countries submit more ambitious climate targets (NDCs).





### **Dominance of Debt-Based Finance:**

A substantial portion of the international climate finance Africa receives comes in the form of loans and debt, rather than grants, which exacerbates the continent's debt burden and limits its fiscal space.



### **Uneven Distribution:**

African nations face significant hurdles in accessing available international climate and health funds.



### **Limited Access to Multilateral Funds:**

Access to key multilateral climate funds, crucial for mobilizing private finance, remains low for African countries.



### **Neocolonial Economic Structures:**

Climate finance mechanisms have been criticized for reinforcing existing neocolonial economic structures, perpetuating dependency and wealth extraction from the Global South.



### **Changing Funding Context:**

The funding withdrawal of USAID to Africa has greatly impacted many health and climate-related interventions in the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) regional block that heavily relied on outside funding. Most Governments in ESA are failing to meet their Abuja Declaration commitments of committing 15% of their national budgets to Health.



### **Health is Sidelined:**

Climate finance primarily targets energy, infrastructure, and agriculture, with health receiving a negligible portion (less than 0.5% globally).



### **Policy Disconnect:**

Health policy is often separated from climate policy, leading to missed funding opportunities for climate-health initiatives in Africa.



# Health Systems in ESA



African health systems face major challenges, including chronic underfunding, workforce shortages, and inadequate infrastructure, exacerbated by factors like poverty, climate change, and volatile donor funding. Despite improvements in life expectancy and strides against infectious diseases in some areas, many countries struggle to provide accessible, equitable, and quality care. With the devastating impact of climate change, increase in health emergencies, dwindling external funding, there is the growing need to strengthen these systems through better governance, increased domestic funding, integration of traditional medicine, and international cooperation, aiming for greater resilience against future health crises.

## Key Challenges



***Underfunding and Volatile Financing:*** Inadequate domestic budgets and unstable external donor commitments leave health systems vulnerable and hinder essential service delivery.



***Workforce Shortages:*** A lack of skilled healthcare professionals, insufficient infrastructure, and limited technological support contribute to inefficiencies.



**Infrastructure Gaps:** Poor access to hospitals and clinics, especially in rural areas, prevents many people from receiving care, often due to poverty and transport costs.



**Competing Health Burdens:** Systems must manage increasing chronic diseases alongside persistent infectious diseases, further straining resources.



**Poverty and Lack of Insurance:** High poverty levels limit people's ability to afford healthcare, while limited health insurance markets prevent the growth of financial pools to support systems.

### **STRATEGIC THINKING**



**Strengthening Governance:** Establishing effective frameworks for policy, monitoring, and accountability is crucial for managing resources and stakeholders.



**Prioritizing Domestic Resources:** Shifting reliance from external aid to increased domestic financing is key for long-term sustainability and national ownership.



**Strategic International Partnerships:** Collaborations with external donors and international bodies are essential for supporting capacity building and institutional strengthening.



**Focus on Resilience:** Building systems that can withstand and recover from health crises and climate shocks is a major priority.



**Leveraging the Demographic Dividend:** Investments in education and human capital are vital to support a large and growing workforce, boosting economic growth and health outcomes.





# International Peoples Health University (IPHUs)



To address these climate related health challenges in Eastern and Southern Africa, the Peoples Health Movement (PHM) ESA under the Health Systems Thematic Group has organized a skill building workshop popularly called International Peoples Health University (IPHU). This International Peoples Health University (IPHU) is bringing together 50 youth health and climate change activists in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) from 15th to 18th December 2025 to look at how climate change, health emergencies and financing are affecting health systems in ESA and what needs to be done to remedy the situation. The ESA IPHU intend to come up with a regional climate and health emergencies action plan and develop a coordinated structure for effective coordination for Eastern and Southern Africa. The IPHU will be held at Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHEs) in Lilongwe, Malawi, Southern Africa from December 15th to 18th 2025. It targets participants from over 16 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA).



# KAMUZU UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



Malawi is one of the countries in Africa that has been hugely affected by natural disasters impacting on health such as Cyclone Freddy. Additionally, Malawi faces increasing climate and health emergencies, including outbreaks of waterborne diseases like cholera due to floods and prolonged droughts, and heightened risks of malaria and malnutrition. Extreme weather events, such as tropical cyclones and heavy rainfall, exacerbate injuries, displacement, and damage to infrastructure. These climate impacts also worsen existing health issues and threaten livelihoods, increasing stress on vulnerable populations, particularly women and girls.



Similarly, Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) region faces Climate change which is fueling health emergencies by increasing extreme weather events like floods and droughts, which expand the range of vector-borne diseases (e.g., malaria, cholera), cause water and food insecurity, and worsen health outcomes for vulnerable populations. These climate-related pressures strain limited health infrastructure, requiring urgent investment in resilient health systems, improved surveillance, and coordinated regional preparedness to address rising infectious disease outbreaks and humanitarian crises.





# PHM Malawi ESA IPHU Team

- CHAIRPERSON: Wilson Damien Asibu
- VICE CHAIRPERSON: Ellos Lodzeni
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- Linga Munthali
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