

IDSA Floor Statement for World Health Assembly 72

11.6 Health, Environment and Climate Change

GHC supported by IDSA, NCD Child, Pathfinder and AAP, supports the draft global strategy on health, environment and climate change. Climate change poses an urgent threat to health and is likely to increase the spread of waterborne, vector-borne and zoonotic infectious diseases, as well as infections related to extreme weather and population displacement. Major storms and rising sea levels can lead to cholera. Mosquitos and ticks spread, placing new populations at risk of dengue, Zika and Lyme disease. Influenza strains are increasingly diverse as animals, vectors and humans are forced into closer contact. Women and girls in remote communities reliant on natural resources are the least able to adapt to climate change.

Environmental risks must be addressed and governments must reduce carbon emissions. We urge the inclusion of infectious diseases and other health risks in comprehensive responses to climate change, including efforts to promote community resilience and research to inform infection prevention and response.

Air pollution is a major risk factor for NCDs, and unsafe water and poor sanitation are responsible for over 800K preventable deaths annually. We request WHO and Member States support the following:

- Establish primary prevention via an integrated approach to environmental health and UHC
- Prioritize needs of young people who are disproportionately affected by many environmental risks
- Prevent sequelae of pollution as it relates to transportation, agriculture, industry, water and sanitation
- Prioritize challenges by region and ensure reliable monitoring and reporting are accessible across all sectors
- Ensure adequate funding for active reduction in environmental pollutants
- Engage health care sector and invest in research, surveillance, reporting and tracking of climate-associated health effects
- Recognize vast body of learning and evidence from the Population-Health-Environment community and scale up this domain's successes to reach rural populations.