Environmental determinants of health in Africa

Continental challenges and change

Environmental challenges
- Water and sanitation issues
- Reduced agricultural yields
- Rapid unplanned urbanisation
- Indoor and outdoor air pollution
- Climate change
- Temperature increase of 4°C

Health consequences
- Hunger, thirst and malnutrition
- Changing disease vectors and patterns
- Three diseases carry 60% of health impacts
  - diarrhoea
  - respiratory infections
  - malaria

In Africa, 28% of the disease burden can be attributed to the environment.

It’s going to get worse
By the year 2100 the projections indicate:

**Disease**
Environmental changes lead to more vectors.
According to the Mapping Malaria Risk in Africa (MARA) Project, there may be...

**Water**
Rising temperatures and droughts may mean...

**Climate change**
Altered weather patterns will possibly lead to...

**Population**
The population could grow from 800 million to 4 billion, which is...

16-28% increase in person-month malaria exposures
40% less rainfall
4°C increase in temperature
500% more people
Environmental determinants of health in Africa

8 things Africa needs to survive

The WHO and UNEP-initiated SANA process places ecosystems at the centre and assesses environment-related health factors and risks.

31 African countries undertook a Situation Analysis and Needs Assessment (SANA) to define their most pressing needs.

8 needs that must be met to fulfill the Libreville Declaration
1. Advocacy
2. Policy
3. Regulations and legislation
4. Intersectoral coordination
5. Institution building
6. Human resources
7. Financial resources
8. Research

What can we do about it?

In 2008, African Ministers of Health and the Environment developed and signed a shared African response, the Libreville Declaration, with the following 11 action points:

1. Develop/establish a strategic alliance for environment and health
2. Develop/update national frameworks
3. Integrate objectives in national poverty reduction strategies
4. Establish/strengthen health and environment institutions
5. Support knowledge acquisition and management
6. Establish/strengthen systems for environmental surveillance
7. Implement mechanisms for enforcing international conventions and national regulations
8. Set up national monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
9. Systematic assessment of health and environment risks
10. Develop partnerships for targeted advocacy
11. Achieve a balance in budgetary resource allocation for priority programmes