

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General, World Health Organization

2024 Report on the WHO-Civil Society Working Group to Advance Action on Climate and Health

February 2025

Dear Director-General Dr Tedros,

Entering its seventh year of anchoring and enabling formal collaboration between WHO and health civil society to tackle the challenge of climate change and its impact on people's health, the WHO-Civil Society Working Group to Advance Action on Climate and Health is pleased to report on our 2024 activities and accomplishments.

First and foremost, we would like to celebrate with you the adoption of a new World Health Assembly [resolution on Climate change and health](#) at WHA77, with a resounding 37 Member States co-sponsoring the resolution. We would like to congratulate WHO for prioritising climate change in its [Fourteenth General Programme of Work](#) and appreciate the [WHA77 Strategic Roundtable "Climate change and health: a global vision for joint action"](#), followed by engagement with UNFCCC's Bonn intersessional and COP29. This strong WHO leadership, combined with robust Member State engagement, and civil society dialogue, lays the track for more ambitious work on climate and health going forward.

The WHO-Civil Society Working Group (WG) was established in 2019 in response to your request during COP23 in Bonn. It is co-convened by WHO and the Global Climate and Health Alliance (GCHA), and co-chaired by WHO Assistant Director General, Healthier Populations Dr. Ailan Li, and GCHA executive director Dr. Jeni Miller. The WG serves as a formal structure to support collaboration between the WHO and health civil society, powerfully increasing our joint impact on climate decision-making to protect health, as well as on integrating attention to climate change in health decision-making.

Work on the WHA climate resolution built on the momentum of the [COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate and Health](#), endorsed by 151 countries. It is our impression that the work of developing the WHA resolution motivated conversations within governments, across health ministries and other sectors, establishing just the sort of joint and interdisciplinary engagement on climate and health essential to delivering a safe and healthy planet for all.

Working Group members are proud to have catalysed the resolution, after learning from WHO that the previous climate resolution dated back to 2008. We have amplified its adoption and contributed to consultations on the Global Plan of Action for its implementation. We deeply appreciate WHO's leadership, and the ongoing collaboration between WHO and civil society that contributed to these outcomes.

Additional 2024 Accomplishments

- **Early input on the WHO's [COP29 Special Report on Climate Change and Health](#):** The Working Group provided input into WHO's COP29 Special Report, and members also participated in subsequent public consultations. Members also helped to amplify and disseminate the report upon its launch.
- **Coordination of GCHA-led COP29 Policy Recommendations, complementing the WHO COP29 Special Report:** Informed by and complementing the WHO COP29 Special Report, this year's Policy

Recommendations were endorsed by over 100 notable health and climate organizations, and include detailed inputs tailored to each of several COP negotiating streams, to guide negotiators on integrating health considerations and health protections throughout COP decisions. The alignment of the Policy Recommendations with the recommendations in WHO's COP29 Special Report was facilitated by the strong and ongoing WHO and civil society collaboration made possible by the Working Group.

- **Input on the Global Plan of Action, for furtherance of the WHA climate resolution:** The Working Group has been pleased to provide input into the Global Plan of Action for the climate resolution, and looks forward to supporting its strong implementation.
- **Events at the WHO Health Pavilion at COP29:** For the fourth year, the health community had a 'footprint' within the Blue Zone at COP, thanks to the Health Pavilion hosted by WHO. Once again, a [rich program of events](#) over the two weeks of COP showcased the health arguments for ambitious climate action across many different sectors and topics. WG members organized sessions and served as speakers in Pavilion events.
- **Established the WHO-CS Working Group COP Task Force:** While the Working Group comprises leading health civil society organizations with a valuable role to play in preparing for and influencing activities at COP, as the climate and health community has grown, it has become evident that additional partners should at times be at that table. In 2024 the WG established a COP Task Force, including WG members *plus* additional civil society organizations and relevant academic and funding partners, to jointly plan and deliver activities in the run up to COP30 in 2025 and beyond, to ensure a strong and growing focus on health that continues to center health in the COP space.

We were pleased to see the establishment of the [Baku COP Presidencies Continuity Coalition for Climate and Health](#), and credit WHO for fostering conditions that inspired COP presidencies to take this important step. We appreciate the long term leadership of WHO in calling for addressing climate change, and insisting that doing so requires addressing its upstream cause, the use of fossil fuels. Dr. Tedros, your influential voice on these issues, and your presence at COP, makes a difference and is deeply appreciated by civil society.

While reporting proudly on our joint accomplishments, we must also acknowledge the increasing challenges that our world continues to face, and that have, in fact, increased in recent months. COP29 did not deliver the clear, committed, concessional funding that developing countries need in order to respond to growing climate impacts and their toll on people's health and our health systems; funding that developing countries also need to achieve robust access to clean and reliable energy. It also failed to deliver concrete, action-oriented commitments for the full and equitable phase out of fossil fuels, the primary driver of climate change. Climate impacts continue to escalate globally, costing more, and taking an increasing toll on the health and the well being of populations. *We still have important work to do together.*

This year, 2025, offers an opportunity to make progress on these issues at both the national and the international levels, especially as countries develop their third round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs 3.0), and as we head into COP30 in Brazil, where the COP presidency has committed to making health an important focus. Together, we must drive for meaningful integration of health into each country's NDC 3.0; and a robust focus on health at COP30 and beyond. The issue is both urgent, and vitally important.

The growing climate and health community continues to bring more voices to the table, more attention to the issue, more robust evidence in support of the case for climate-health action, and a stronger insistence that people's health and well-being be at the center of climate decision-making, at all levels of government. The members of the WHO Working Group look forward to continuing our important work together to deliver a safe, healthy, sustainable world for all people.

Sincerely,

Jeni Miller, PhD, Executive Director, **Global Climate and Health Alliance** (co-chair)

Githinji Gitahi, MD, CEO; Martin Muchangi, Director, Population Health & Environment, **Amref Health Africa**

Professor Vivekanand Jha, Executive Director; Chhavi Bhandari, Head, Impact and Engagement, **The George Institute for Global Health, India**

Jonathan Jennings, Co CEO, **Health in Harmony**

Diana Picon Manyari, **Health Care Without Harm**

Howard Catton, Executive Director, **International Council of Nurses**

International Federation of Medical Students Associations

Prof Ruth Etzel, MD, PhD, Co-Chair, Committee on Environmental Health and Climate Change., Prof Jonathan Klein, MD, MPH, Treasurer; **International Pediatric Association**

Tanushree Jain, Chairperson of Public Health 2024-25, **International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation**

José Félix Hoyo, MD; Javier Ramirez, Planning Coordinator, **Medicines du Monde**

Lwando Maki, MD **South African Medical Association**

Rosie Tasker, Global Advocacy Manager, **Union for International Cancer Control**

Sumi Mehta, Vice President, Environmental and Climate Health, Environmental and Climate Health **Vital Strategies**

Hannah Marcus, Co-Chair Environmental Health Working Group; Marta Lomazzi, PhD, Executive Manager, **World Federation of Public Health Associations**

Kelcey Armstrong-Walenczak, Policy and Advocacy Manager; Elvis Achiri Ndikum, Air Pollution and Climate Change Expert Group Member, **World Heart Federation**

Dr Ashok Philip, President, **World Medical Association**