



World Health
Organization

Regional Office for South-East Asia

WORLD HEALTH DAY 7th April 2008
PROTECTING HEALTH FROM CLIMATE CHANGE

Toolkit for Event Managers



Photo credit: © Abir Abdullah/Still Pictures



Toolkit for Event Managers



**World Health
Organization**

Regional Office for South-East Asia

© World Health Organization 2008

All rights reserved.

This guide is intended to support you in developing materials and in planning and conducting events to mark World Health Day 2008. The guide will be regularly updated on the basis of feedback from users via World Health Day 2008 web site: www.searo.who.int/WorldHealthDay2008.

The material in this guide may be reproduced, adapted, translated and otherwise used in relation to publications and events related to World Health Day 2008. All such reproductions, adaptations and translations may bear the name and logo of World Health Day 2008. The name and emblem of the World Health Organization may not be used. The guide may not be used in connection with the promotion of specific commercial companies or products.

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

All reasonable precautions have been taken by the World Health Organization to verify the information contained in this publication. However, the published material is being distributed without warranty of any kind, either express or implied. The responsibility for the interpretation and use of the material lies with the reader. In no event shall the World Health Organization be liable for damages arising from its use.

Any queries regarding this guide should be addressed to: sde@searo.who.int

Designed and Printed in India by: Macro Graphics Pvt. Ltd.

Contents

Message from the Director-General of the World Health Organization.....	iv
Aims and Objectives of World Health Day 2008	1
World Health Day 2008: "Protecting Health from Climate Change"	2
Getting Started	2
Collect Information	2
Develop and Package the Message	2
Mobilize Others and Plan Events	3
Keeping the Momentum throughout 2008	4
How to Interest the Media in World Health Day	4
Understanding the Media	5
Creating and Sustaining Media Interest.....	6
Influencing Public Opinion.....	7
Newspaper Contributions	7
Other Actions	7
Using the Media	8
Action Plan Checklist	8



Message from the Director-General of the World Health Organization

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time. It not only threatens to change our way of life, but is expected to have a huge impact on health and human suffering on a global scale. In the face of the challenging phenomena faced by humanity, we need champions throughout the world who lead by example, dedicated individuals who can reverse the tide of global warming.

World Health Day, celebrated on 7th April every year, is a unique opportunity to draw worldwide attention to a subject of major importance to global health. This year, World Health Day focuses on what should be obvious: the need to protect health from the adverse effects of climate change. Apart from demonstrating your personal commitment to organizing events around World Health Day, it is going to be vital to make 2008 a remarkable year in ensuring that everyone is aware of the health issues and the urgency of the goals to be achieved. Every event and every voice on every occasion will be vital in ensuring new energy and commitment to turning the tide in a situation we can no longer abide.

Climate-sensitive diseases are among the largest global killers. Diarrhoea, malaria and protein-energy malnutrition caused more than 3.3 million deaths globally in 2002, 29% of them in Africa. Even these impressive numbers do not reflect the devastating indirect impacts of climate change on health.

What can be done? Faced with a rapidly changing environment, governments must refocus their public health policies not only to deal with the current burden of disease but also to take measures to reduce and prevent disease in the future. Improving our response to disease and surveillance is also vital. As climates rapidly change, the risk of infectious disease rises—as humans and animals seek new territory, and the diseases they carry also spread further. We also have to manage our environment better.

World Health Day 2008 provides the occasion not just to highlight the magnitude of the problem, but also to bring all stakeholders together to apply solutions that work. Climate change will only respond to nations acting in concert. By encouraging personal action, we can do our part to dramatically reduce greenhouse gases and begin turning back the clock on climate change. Whatever kind of events you decide to organize and however modest your budget, we hope this tool kit will help you to achieve the maximum impact for your activities.

We have to act now—we simply cannot afford not to. All your efforts will contribute to making World Health Day 2008 “Protecting Health from Climate Change” a landmark event!

Dr. Margaret Chan
Director-General
World Health Organization

Toolkit for Event Managers

Aims and Objectives of World Health Day 2008

The material in this guide is intended to assist in the planning process to mark World Health Day 2008 on the theme “Protecting Health from Climate Change”. It provides information on how different sectors—including individuals, institutions or government agencies involved in international public health—can play a role in the celebrations. Although specific events should be tailored according to the cultural, social and economic conditions in each country, we believe the ideas shown in this tool kit will stimulate a truly global celebration and will anchor climate change at the heart of the health agenda.

The theme “Protecting Health from Climate Change” puts health at center stage: it was selected in recognition that global climate change is posing ever growing threats to public health security. Through increased collaboration, the global community will be better prepared to cope with climate-related health challenges globally and in regions, countries and communities, including by strengthening surveillance and control of infectious diseases, ensuring safer use of diminishing water supplies, and coordinating health action in emergencies.

The theme can be interpreted relatively easily in different contexts, countries, cultures and languages. It can be understood in many different ways, based on regional and national priorities and contexts. In its broad interpretation, the theme allows for the establishment of

linkages between climate change and health that would otherwise remain unexplored, touching on all areas such as health and security, health and environment, health and energy, health and food, health and climate change, and health and obesity.

The theme “Protecting Health from Climate Change” is a call to reach beyond the community—in particular to the sectors of health, education, transport and industry—and to link with worldwide efforts of international agencies, non-governmental organizations, governments and the community at large. It is an opportunity to capitalize on the energy and commitment of people, and to achieve a common goal: to attract global and local attention and to galvanize action, so that every person on the planet is less vulnerable to the health impacts of climate, less vulnerable to climate change, and less vulnerable to the threats of climate change.

World Health Day 2008 is a unique opportunity to focus attention and to create momentum that compels governments, the international community, civil society and individuals to take action. On the Day (7th April 2008), it is anticipated that your organization will be one of the hundreds around the world hosting events on the theme “Protecting Health from Climate Change”. It is expected that different countries will celebrate World Health Day in their own manner.

All actions planned for World Health Day 2008 will work towards raising awareness of the general public and

bringing about a positive change in public opinion, which in turn influences policy-makers. A range of activities in every country will make a lasting difference between passive indifference and active involvement.

World Health Day 2008: “Protecting Health from Climate Change”

The goals

- Raise awareness and public understanding of the health consequences of climate change.
- Show the impact of the interdependency between health and climate change on national and international decisions and policies.
- Demonstrate WHO’s role in facing the challenges globally and in regions, countries and communities.
- Spark commitment among governments, international organizations, donors, civil society, businesses and communities (especially among young people) to collaborate in putting health at the heart of the climate change agenda.

Getting Started

Key steps in the process of planning your activities for World Health Day 2008:

- Collect information.
- Develop and package the message.
- Mobilize others and plan events.

Your planning will involve working with the media at all stages; various ways of using communication channels are discussed in this guide.

In addition, in order to be able to keep the momentum going beyond World Health Day, you will need to think right from the start, of ways in which the activities can be continued and built on throughout the year. We suggest you read this tool kit all the way through before you start planning.

Join us now in organizing a successful day.

Collect Information

Transform your local and national statistics into key messages and stories. Make a list of all these—backed up by statistics and local or national evidence—that can be used for different target audiences. The messages and stories should support successes, identify gaps and set out the next steps in your World Health Day activities.

Facts based on solid research are crucial to any advocacy campaign. Although many global statistics exist, local data will be most persuasive to local politicians and media.

Your campaign is a newsworthy media event, so work with media professionals and enlist their help to assess its impact.

Develop and Package the Message

It will be useful to keep the following points in mind when developing the message:

1. Collect information on climate change and health in your region or country.
2. Identify gaps (problems) in ways of protecting health from climate change, as well as the steps you can take to raise awareness and stimulate action.
3. Publicize and promote the work done by your organization to improve the situation.
4. Highlight success stories.

Once you have collected and analysed data, transform the results into something everyone can relate to. Short, catchy phrases—called “sound bites”—are best for this purpose. Remember that the message may need to be adapted to fit the target audience you are aiming to reach. Below are a few examples of sound bites on the theme “Protecting Health from Climate Change” that could be used under different conditions.

Sound bite 1: Climate change threatens health

There is sound evidence that global warming is now unequivocal. Without urgent, immediate action through changes in lifestyle and attitude, the effects on the global climate system could be “abrupt or irreversible”, sparing no countries, causing more frequent and more intense heatwaves, rainstorms, tropical cyclones and surges in sea level this very century. These occurrences threaten human health security and cost lives. As early as 2020, according to a report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 75 million to 250 million people in Africa will suffer water shortages, while residents of Asia’s megacities will be at great risk of river and coastal flooding.

Sound bite 2: Climate change will burden health services

Health professionals are on the front line in dealing with the health impacts of climate change. The most vulnerable populations are those who live in poor countries where the health system already struggles to detect, control and treat infectious diseases and health conditions,

...the effects on the global climate system could be "abrupt or irreversible",...

including malaria, dengue haemorrhagic fever, protein-energy malnutrition and diarrhoea. Climate change will exacerbate these weaknesses by bringing new pressures on health services, with greater frequency.

Sound bite 3: Protection of health from climate change calls for a preventive public health approach

To preserve health in a changing climate, we need to strengthen and reform the systems we have rather than invent new, separate structures. To protect health from climate change we must tackle the issue on all fronts: reducing and responding to climate change is a shared international responsibility.

Sound bite 4: Invest in health systems, be prepared for climate change

International collaboration among transition economies and developed and developing countries, with increased focus on strengthening public health systems, is crucial to protecting health in a changing climate. Preparing health systems for climate change includes strengthening surveillance and control of infectious diseases, ensuring safer use of diminishing water supplies, and coordinating health action in emergencies.

Sound bite 5: WHO is responding to the climate change challenge

WHO is bringing the global community together to address the growing threat of climate change to public health security by: supporting global policy efforts on climate change; strongly advocating for national, group and individual action to promote human health; helping Member States prepare their health systems for emerging challenges brought about by climate change; and providing guidance on how development decisions in other sectors can enhance health at the same time as they cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Mobilize Others and Plan Events

Approach local partners with an outline of activities and events for World Health Day 2008 and ask for their involvement and support. Explain how their participation shows enlightened self-interest; as well as supporting a good cause, it will increase their visibility and enhance their profile in the community.

Discussions, forums, seminars and courses are useful for exchanging information with the public, non-governmental organizations, policy-makers and

Health sector, doctors and nurses including social workers

- Promote recognition of the main health threats from climate change.
- Stress the health sector's direct responsibility to respond to the threats to health that climate change is posing on the population.
- Point out that many of the most effective interventions in protecting health from climate change are basic public health interventions.
- Discuss health promotion and care interventions.
- Encourage health professionals to adopt a new approach towards prevention and treatment, for example informing the population about the correct behavior to take in critical situations or being alert to the possibility that unfamiliar diseases may occur.
- Consider that climate change requires us to be imaginative, more collaborative, and prepared to look to a more distant future at the same time as dealing with the immediate, pressing problems.
- Evaluate the impact of the actions taken.

Policy-makers and decision-makers

- Identify the relevant health and environment policies and legislation, and the individuals in government responsible for them.
- Assess information on climate change and health and ensure that the priority issues receive the necessary high-level attention.
- Ensure that government budgets for environment, health and other sectors are adequate to support improvement programmes.
- Promote linkages between health and environment policies.
- Raise awareness among stakeholders of the health impact of climate change.

Local authorities, mayors, non-governmental organizations, communities and individuals

- Put pressure on authorities to provide better services.
- Build community awareness about health at the heart of the climate change agenda.
- Influence local and national policies, and hold authorities accountable for their actions and for the services they provide.

Education: teachers, students and children

Provide teachers with accessible materials to educate children on the impacts of health from climate change.
Provide accessible materials to illustrate how climate change influences health and how behavior can mitigate climate change.

Private sector

Involve the private sector in preparedness and in vulnerability reduction by forming public-private partnerships.
Create institutional and management arrangements to ensure that the private sector will be involved in reducing and responding to climate change.

decision-makers, and associations of physicians and teachers. The boxes below provide checklists of points for discussion and actions you might choose to take, according to the people and organizations you could involve.

Keeping the Momentum throughout 2008

How to Interest the Media in World Health Day

This section gives you some technical information on reaching and using the three primary channels of mass media—television, radio and print. The discussion that follows sets out appropriate goals for your media outreach efforts. It provides information on how to understand and work directly with the media and suggests resources for reaching specialized media markets.

Organize events

Parades, competitions, street events and quizzes using the World Health Day 2008 theme “Protecting Health from Climate Change” all create media attention and get the message out to large numbers of people in an entertaining and stimulating way. This is a good way to reach people who might not be attracted to more traditional events, such as seminars or meetings.

Involve celebrities

It is a good idea to involve celebrities as spokespersons. Remember it takes time and preparation to ensure the effective collaboration of celebrities, as they and their agents or managers must be made thoroughly aware of the causes and consequences of the subject matter and you must explain how you want them to contribute to the event.

Communicate effectively

Media relations, also referred to as public relations, are most effective ways of reaching target audiences.

Celebrities

- Choose individuals who are well known and respected within the country or community and who can draw positive attention to World Health Day.
- Invite personalities in music, film, sports and politics to talk about the issues.
- Engage a well-known person or politician who lives nearby or is from your area—they may provide “local support” for your event.
- Make sure the celebrities are briefed in advance.

To preserve health in a changing climate, we need to strengthen and reform the systems...

For example, you can use the news and public affairs programming in your area to highlight health issues. Before coordinating your media relations efforts, review and set down what you want to accomplish. Doing this will help you to develop appropriate media activities and messages consistent with the goals outlined above.

When reviewing your communications programme, ask yourself the following questions:

- Who is your target audience?
- What messages should you use to influence your target audience?
- What types of media outreach would be efficient and cost-effective for this purpose?

Understanding the Media

Members of the media are also members of the community. They will be interested in your messages in their capacity as private citizens and also as professionals. Two things are needed, however, to increase media coverage: (1) understanding what the media wants in a story and (2) making sure that the information is provided to them in a clear and timely manner.

Having effective media relations is simple as long as you keep these points in mind.

In addition, all reporters and producers seek similar story elements. They look for audience appeal, issues that stimulate debate, stories that generate increased readership, and sustained public interest through fresh perspectives on an issue. The media will avoid stories that are inaccurate or incomplete, as well as organizations that are overly persistent after a story has been rejected.

News releases

News releases should be one or two pages in length, and it is important to include the five Ws: who is involved; what happened; when it happened; where it happened; and why or how it happened.

In one or two sentences, the lead paragraph should answer these five Ws. Most reporters decide whether or not to read further depending on the first paragraph, and print editors tend to cut the press release from the bottom up. The second or third paragraph should include a quote reporters can use in their article.

Feature news releases can be three to four pages in length and should capture and build on a story you want to pitch. Attention-grabbing headings are also important. Some suggestions for press releases include:

- A profile of an active health community leader —what he or she has done and why?
- The barriers that exist to improving community health and why?
- Personal stories of people's experience of overcoming health-related problems.
- Targeted prevention programmes, perhaps for immunization or clean water supplies.
- Launch of a partnership with a local business to combat a health problem.
- A local angle on international issues.

Media kits

A media kit provides information prepared especially for the media and released on the day of the event. Often organizations have a standard media kit, which includes material introducing the organization. For major news events, the standard kit should be supplemented with current information relating to the event. Examples of materials that might be included in a media kit are:

- Statistics on the prevalence of a particular disease in your area.
- Information on your organization and its prevention programmes.
- Information on national, state or local hotlines or resources.
- Brief biographies of key officials and spokespersons in your organization.

Forty ways of celebrating World Health Day

1. Conferences, health fairs and fun runs.
2. Distributing educational materials.
3. Endorsements and participation by athletes, celebrities and government officials.
4. Producing and distributing public service announcements and news releases.
5. Assemblies, conferences, workshops and symposia.
6. Games and contests (posters, writing, photo, essay, exercise and art).
7. Guest speaker presentations.
8. Plays, music, films and audiovisual presentations.
9. Health fairs, health risk reduction appraisals and diagnostic screenings.
10. Fund-raising for health causes.
11. Writing letters to members of parliament, government officials and the media to promote health causes.
12. Set aside class time for a special lesson on Protecting Health from Climate Change.
13. Form a youth theatre group to perform plays addressing adolescent climate change and health issues.
14. Have students in class form small groups and discuss their ideas and questions about climate change and health.
15. Create a special health writing assignment for using essays, poems, books and research reports about the responsibility we all share in facing up to health issues.
16. Have students locate statistics and articles about health problems from different regions of the world.
17. Design a board game or quiz on global health facts.
18. Invite a doctor, nurse or community health worker to come and talk to students.
19. Write a letter or article for the school newspaper on Protecting Health from Climate Change.
20. Notify members, chapters and affiliates of professional associations.
21. Place articles in publications.
22. Distribute radio and videotapes, news releases.
23. Hold "open house" tours of facilities.
24. Organize a lecture or panel discussion on "Protecting Health from Climate Change".
25. Invite speakers to your school from local hospitals.
26. Arrange special service projects by university, civic, religious and social clubs.
27. Sponsor a theatre production or music concert in which proceeds go to a local charity.
28. Sponsor a T-shirt, button or pencil sale, a bumper stick, pins, a walk or a run to benefit a climate change and health-related programme in your area.
29. Hold a film festival featuring educational films about climate change and health.
30. Promotions by retail merchants.
31. Professional sports pre-game ceremonies and scoreboard salutes.
32. Health fairs and health risk appraisals.
33. Employee fun runs.
34. Poster exhibitions.
35. Produce a documentary.
36. Public service announcement on radio.
37. Postcards to members of parliament.
38. Scientific conferences.
39. Slogan competitions.
40. Sponsor a film.

Keep the activities of the World Health Day theme going throughout the year. **World Health Day should not be the only advocacy effort of the year!** The contacts made and the results achieved can be built on throughout the year, to keep the essential elements at the forefront of public opinion and to enable the issues to gather momentum. Keep the heat on!

Creating and Sustaining Media Interest

There are a number of different ways to create and sustain media interest in your event. Having a radio or TV station cosponsor your World Health Day event will highlight its commitment to health as well as generate the potential for free publicity. You can use prepared World Health Day slogans to attract both media and public attention. Use them on all publicity-related materials, from invitations to media kits, buttons and banners. If in doubt, "Protecting Health from Climate Change" conveys a powerful message.

When preparing your event, allow plenty of time for planning, and choose carefully the date and time. Select a time when your most important audiences will be available and conflicting events are not occurring.

Supply plenty of photographs (most newspapers prefer black and white) and camera-ready graphics such as

Keep the activities of the World Health Day theme going throughout the year.

charts and logos. Some camera-ready material can be obtained from the WHO Office of Information (see contact list). Supplements for the basic media kit for a special event may include the following:

- News release(s) on the event.
- Biographies of people (speakers, panel members, etc.) relevant to the event in which you are trying to interest the reporter.
- Copies of relevant written materials, such as statements to be given at a news conference, speeches, etc.

Monitor your media relations

Track your media contacts by asking all your colleagues to record summary information about their telephone conversations on a simple form giving name, organization, date, time, and topics discussed. Examining the media contact forms can provide information such as how many media enquiries were received over a period of time, on which subjects, and whether enquiries are increasing or decreasing.

Influencing Public Opinion

Newspaper Contributions

Two tools for outsiders to express their views in newspapers are Letters to the Editor and short pieces that appear opposite the editorial page (known as “op-eds” in newspaper parlance). Most newspapers will usually consider up to two op-eds a year. The piece should be quite short (ideally 300–400 words), well thought out, well written and persuasive; it should be sent by the head of your organization or someone of similar status.

Be selective about your Letters to the Editor: if you write too often they will not get printed. Your letter is more likely to be published if it contains fewer than 400 words. You should develop your main idea within the first two paragraphs. If

you are responding to a specific article, put its title, author, and the date when it appeared in the first sentence.

Other Actions

Contact reporters on the staff of local papers and persuade them to publicize your event. In addition, arrange to have the event listed in local newspaper calendars and announced on television and radio stations.

Deliver invitations two weeks in advance of the event, by hand or by mail. Two to three days in advance, call editors and reporters and ask if they plan to attend. The day before the event, call the selected media again and politely remind them about the event.

During the event, set up a media sign-in table and hand out media kits. Try to set up interviews with participants and introduce the media representatives to the appropriate spokespeople. A good idea is to issue everyone with name badges (with names big and bold!). Have someone from your organization take photographs to illustrate future articles on the event; they will also be useful for your own files.

Immediately after the event, send a news release to any reporters who were unable to attend and send follow-up letters to the editors of local newspapers. You can also write a follow-up article for inclusion in appropriate community publications, illustrated with photographs. Remember to thank the community and participants, and inform them of the success of the event.

Coverage of your World Health Day event can be expanded by planning in advance a system for measuring the success of the event. Record information such as how many people attended, how many volunteers were recruited, and how much media coverage was received. Not only is this information useful for internal evaluation, but it can provide focus for post-event news releases.

... encourage collaboration between local organizations...

Using the Media

Utilizing the media to the best effect requires a collaborative effort. In a community, there are often several groups working to promote their particular event. If open communication does not exist between them, competition for media coverage may occur, thus causing tension between the groups and confusion among the media. The best way to avoid this is to encourage collaboration between local organizations, if possible forming an intermediary group that will coordinate the names, places, dates, etc. of each organization's events to be covered.

Although you may sometimes call on a reporter to put a local angle on a national story, much of the time you will need to create newsworthy material on your own. The three most important elements in a good story, from the media's point of view, are action, people and substance. Match the needs of the media with your message.

There may be other opportunities throughout 2008 to build on the momentum you set in motion by the World Health Day celebrations. You may like to consider setting up a calendar of events, activities and programmes that are important to the community, which you could use to sustain your relationship with the media. Because the news media thrive on novelty, however, you can only realistically expect to achieve significant coverage two or three times a year.

✓ Action Plan Checklist

- Create a World Health Day planning committee. Invite the people identified above to attend a planning meeting. Form subcommittees and assign specific duties.
- Choose an activity or activities. Use the suggestions for World Health Day activities to help you decide how best to celebrate the event in your community. Remember, it is better to begin modestly and succeed in reaching that goal than to plan a large project and fail.
- Select an activity format. Decide whether to have one centralized event or many small ones. Will there be audience participation, refreshments, entertainment, etc.?
- Set a date for your event. You can plan activities throughout the week or even the whole year!
- Set up an action timetable. Schedule dates and deadlines for your planning activities from the first meeting through to the day of your event.
- Choose a location for your observance. Make certain there is enough space with adequate lighting, heating/air, acoustics, accessibility, parking, film facilities and refreshments and lunch facilities.
- Identify possible financial sponsors. Many World Health Day activities can be part of existing or planned activities and will require little or no funding. If not, decide what your financial and material needs will be early on and look for support from within your community.
- Decide who will participate in your event. Determine approximately how many people you want to attend. Discuss ways of getting a cross-section of your community involved.
- Identify speakers, celebrities and entertainers. Look for sources of talent and expertise in your community. Make sure you give everyone plenty of time to prepare for the event.
- Make hospitality arrangements. Prepare invitations, acknowledgements, welcoming committees and name tags—and send thank-you notes afterwards to speakers and others who assisted in the event.
- Publicity. Submit news releases to newspapers and to television and radio stations; produce and distribute posters and fliers; announce your event at other meetings.



**World Health
Organization**

Regional Office for South-East Asia

World Health Organization
Regional Office for South-East Asia
World Health House, Mahatma Gandhi Marg,
New Delhi 110 002
India

website: www.searo.who.int/World Health Day 2008

E-mail: sde@searo.who.int