

WORKSHOP REPORT

PLANNING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE HEALTH SECTOR For Health professionals and National Institute of Health and Social Studies (NIHSS) 16th April, 2019, Victoria Hospital

Compiled by Michele Martin for the GCCA+ Component A and the Ministry of Health

BACKGROUND

As a small island developing state, Seychelles is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as sea level rise, salt-water intrusion, heavy rains, flooding, coral bleaching and droughts. It is critical that the population of Seychelles becomes more aware and pro-active in terms of how they can better prepare for present and future impacts of climate change. The Seychelles National Health Strategic Plan 2016-20 states, "it is now imperative for Seychelles to ensure that health service delivery and health systems integrate climate change especially as temperatures on both land and sea continue to rise and extreme weather events become more common". This workshop was identified as a result of a Capacity Needs Assessment for Climate Change undertaken by the European Union funded Seychelles Global Climate Change Alliance project that is providing support to Seychelles in its efforts to address climate change.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

- 1) To increase health professionals' understanding of climate change and its effects on Seychelles' main populated islands
- 2) To explore how the health sector will be impacted by climate change in the short and long terms, and propose strategies to reduce the negative impacts of these effects.
- 3) To explore the needs and options to develop and deliver further specialist capacity building for health sector professionals.

PARTICIPANTS

The workshop was attended by 55 (40 female; 15 male) people, representing students and lecturers from the NIHSS, doctors, nurses, public health and environmental health workers, and the facilitators. A list of all participants can be found in Annex A. The workshop was co-facilitated by Dr. Sanjeev Pughazhendi, Mr. Peter Brinn, Dr. Michele Martin and Mrs Iris Carolus.

WORKSHOP AGENDA

TIME	AGENDA ITEM	LEAD
9.00	Opening Remarks: Minister Adam	Sanjeev
9:15	Overview of Agenda	Michele
9.20	Brief Introduction to Climate Change	Peter
9.50	Climate Change: What do the numbers show? Seychelles Impacts	Michele
10.20	Climate change screening of the Health Strategy 2016-20	Peter
10.30	BREAK	PDS
11.00	Health perspectives overview	Dr. Shobha
11.30	How risk is managed in the health sector: health sector planning	Dr. Shamlaye
12:00	Groupwork: getting started	Peter
12:30	Lunch	
13:30	Group work continued and discussion	
14:30	Conclusion of workshop, evaluations, presentation of certificates	Peter/Sanjeev
15.00	Close	

WORKSHOP EXPENSES AND CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARTNERS

The workshop was organized by a working group including representatives of Ministry of Health (Dr. Sanjeev Pughazhendi, Dr. Conrad Shamlaye, Dr. Shobha) and the GCCA+ team (Peter Brinn, Iris Carolus and Michele Martin). All workshop expenses (venue, refreshments, lunch) were covered by the Ministry of Health.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

The workshop was opened by Minister Adam, who provided an overview of the key implications of climate change for health and health systems, and how Seychelles health sector needs to respond. He committed to supporting further integration of climate change action into Seychelles' health system.

The next section of the program consisted of a series of presentations. Peter from the GCCA+ team engaged participants in an interactive quiz activity then provided an overview of climate science. Michele, also from GCCA+ gave a presentation about the impacts of climate change in Seychelles. After break, Peter showed participants the results of a climate screening exercise done by the GCCA+ of the National Health Strategy, developed in 2018 as part of the new National Development Strategy being compiled by government. Dr. Shobha then provided a synopsis of the ways in which health systems are affected by climate change. In the last presentation, Dr. Shamlaye explained the ways in which a health system can plan to address climate change and then gave a brief overview of the plan launched by the Ministry of Health in 2014 (which has not yet been implemented but touches on a wide range of pertinent issues and could easily be updated). A brief discussion followed whereby participants asked presenters to elaborate on points raised.

The last part of the workshop program was a group work exercise which required participants to organise themselves into three groups:

- Public and community health workers
- Doctors and nurses
- NIHSS lecturers and students

All groups were asked to address the same four questions as they related to their sector:

1. How does climate change affect my sector?
2. What is currently being done in the sector to address climate change?
3. What more needs to be done?
4. What kind of training / capacity building is needed to help health care professionals respond to climate change related issues?

The detailed results of the group work discussions from the three groups are provided below:

QUESTION 1 - HOW DOES CLIMATE CHANGE AFFECT MY SECTOR?

Public & Community Health

- More challenges to health sector in terms of resources such as finance (extra medication, more pesticides for fogging, human resources (more workers to help out during outbreaks);
- Emerging and re-emerging diseases (chikungunya, dengue, nutrition related diseases, malaria, west Nile fever, filariasis, emerging fungal infections, hairy caterpillar rash, black gnat conjunctivitis); parasitic infections, leptospirosis, food contamination especially during floods;
- Disruption of allocation of funds during epidemic outbreaks;
- Reduced workforce due to sick leave;
- An appropriate governance culture needs to be adopted to meet the demands of climate change; health policy makers need to understand adaptation and mitigation measures through governance and different mechanisms e.g. legislative, technical, educational, advisory, cultural, behavioural.

Doctors and Nurses

- Increased use of resources (more stress), including human resources, and physical resources (vehicles, laboratory, reagents, infrastructure, including financial resources);
- Access to services:- access to health centres (clinics located in coastal areas);
- Increased workload :- increase in number of patients (water borne diseases, malnutrition); more investigation required; monitoring and surveillance; risk of medical errors due to fatigue, mental stress, misdiagnosis; more public health education.

NIHSS

- Increased number of rodents and vectors due to accumulation of water pools and poorly kept vegetation;
- Increased physical injury due to erosion and flooding due to proximity to the coast;
- The rise in temperature increases the level of moisture, which in turn creates the ideal environment for fungal growth thus increasing a risk of infections and diseases;
- Increased temperature leads to poor concentration in class and poor performance and also mental and physical stress.

QUESTION 2 - WHAT IS CURRENTLY BEING DONE IN MY SECTOR?

Public & Community Health

- Planning;
- Capacity Building ;
- Response Planning;
- Health Education and Promotion through media, door to door and every day work;
- Partnerships with other agencies and stakeholders;
- Building better infrastructure and health systems .

NIHSS

- Regular cleaning and draining in the compound;
- Plan to set up a garden which will lead to shade as well as having trees to absorb CO₂ thus creating a cooler environment ;
- The Environmental Health Officer curriculum covers disaster and risk management, health impact and assessment;
- Strategies to harvest rain water for school utilities;
- The NIHSS management has planned to set up solar panels for the school to supply cleaner energy according to the NIHSS Strategic Plan;
- During extra curriculum activities the Wildlife Club of Seychelles addresses the impact of climate change.

Doctors and Nurses

- Sensitisation of health workers though, currently, health education doesn't directly address climate change;
- Hospital buildings becoming more energy efficient, e.g. installation of solar panels/PV;
- Breast-feeding is being encouraged with links to combatting climate change: less use of water for preparation of formula, less imports thus reducing the carbon footprint.

QUESTION 3 - IMPORTANT ACTIONS WE NEED TO TAKE IN OUR SECTOR

Public & Community Health

- Be bold enough to implement all strategies and put into action;
- Prepare for epidemics of climate induced diseases;
- Obtain early warning system through SMA;
- Revive and review the Climate Change and Health Adaptation Plan for 2014-2018
- Capacity Building;
- Promote research;
- Find ways to reduce our carbon footprint e.g. procurement of supplies;
- Development of relevant infrastructure guidelines such as building codes, designs and land use plans and upgrade infrastructure accordingly; Review and develop procedures for maintenance of buildings and equipment such as A/C and buildings;
- Development of workforce policy and planning with climate change considerations;
- Allocate tasks appropriately amongst staff for better planning, monitoring and evaluation, including conducting a gap analysis to identify shortcomings and measures to be taken;
- Promote consumption of safe drinking water.

Doctors and Nurses

- Conduct sensitisation workshop for health workers;
- Develop policies on anthropogenic climate change issues;
- Build climate change friendly infrastructure;
- Conduct retrospective research.

NIHSS

- Use NIHSS website/leaflet to share information on climate and health;
- Follow calendar theme on environmental health and climate change;
- Review Health and Safety Policy to include how to cope/ adapt to the effect of climate change;
- Climate Change should be considered as a course and not only for EHO students but for all the programmes offered at NIHSS;
- Health educate the community on climate change.

QUESTION 4 – WHAT ARE THE TRAINING NEEDS FOR OUR SECTOR

Public & Community Health

- Capacity Building:- train staff in the Disease Surveillance Unit on how to link meteorological data with health data; training in health impact assessment, entomology and other public health areas related to climate change; training in Biosecurity esp. management of ports of entry; build capacity of health care workers (HCW) to develop skills; train HCW to advocate on and raise awareness of climate change issues ; build capacity to conduct research; training in food and nutrition security in relation to climate change;
- Link the Disease Surveillance Unit with SMA for prediction of epidemics/health events related to climate change;
- Conduct research on how to link meteorological and health data.

Doctors and Nurses

- Training of HCW to mitigate climate change impacts;
- Have a focal person to coordinate activities, training , policies regarding climate change,
- Conduct training of trainers;
- Establish a specific unit with appropriate resources for dealing with/adapting to climate change;
- Capacity building in conducting research linked to climate change.

NIHSS

- Training on the impact of climate change on pest biology, ecology and control;
- Training on clean energy technology;
- Conduct disaster drills in preparation for disasters;
- Training on collection of data and conducting research on climate change;
- Training on the impacts of climate change in the school;
- Conduct awareness workshop on climate change and health.

The results of group work discussions were compiled and displayed on the wall in the main workshop room. Dr. Sanjeev provided an overall summary of the group discussions to familiarize everyone with the range and scope of the discussions. The group work findings can be used as the basis for further capacity building in climate change and health, as well inform a review and updating of the Climate Change and health action plan.

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Participants were invited to fill in an evaluation form. Out of a total of 55 participants 46 submitted a form. The findings are summarized in the table below.

1. Please tell us at least one new thing you learned	2. What did you enjoy about the workshop?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About CC, causes, and impacts on Seychelles' x20 • That CC is so relevant to health/work in health sector / diseases x16 • Climate change is here and health sector needs to respond x7 • That the MoH already has a climate change strategy x2 • CC is a health risk multiplier x2 • That we all need to work together to deal with climate change • How they measure historic level of CO2 • About GCCA+ • About the landfill • That MoH has an input into the climate change policy for Seychelles x2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group discussions, participation, interactive x19 • Diverse methods used to engage us: the quiz, group work x15 • Presentations and Minister's address x9 • The information provided and shared x5 • Everything x4 • The food x4 • Having students and health workers learning together x3 • Ambiance and atmosphere x2 • Global warming effects/impacts x2 • Brief, informative and to the point x2 • Well organized • Everyone was interested in learning • Knowing that so many different organisations are working together on this

3. What didn't you like?

- All good / enjoyed everything / nothing / no reply x30
- Some presentations too technical / difficult language x6
- Too long x3
- Need more interaction with the presenters
- All of the ways climate change will affect the oceans, all life, and human societies
- Should be 2-3 days
- Group sizes too big
- The food
- Not enough participants from MoH

4. How can you apply what you learned in your work?

- Educate others/colleagues/students about the effects of climate change x27
- Will integrate it in my future plan of action / work / decision-making/ strategies/ policy x7
- Start adapting to climate change and preparing for health eventualities, be more cautious x5
- Integrate it into all health education activities x5
- Keep learning about CC and how it relates to health, diseases and my work x3
- Take action in my personal life x3
- Help reduce carbon footprint at the NIHSS/ workplace x2
- No response x2
- Integrate this info into my assignments/presentations at NIHSS
- Work with other nurses to find innovative ways to adapt to climate change
- Pay more attention to CC when carrying out surveys related to my work
- Network with other sectors like Seychelles Meteorological Authority for better prediction of health events

Numbers indicate how many participants wrote a similar response.

MEDIA COVERAGE

- The Ministry of Health drafted and sent out a press release and members of several media houses were present to cover the workshop.
- Press coverage from the Nation is attached in Annex C
- The workshop was also covered in the evening news on SBC the same evening.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall the workshop was quite lively and productive. Feedback from participants indicated an active engagement with the issue of climate change, which many of them did not previously consider to be a top priority or relevant issue specifically for the health sector. Given that the Ministry of Health already has a very interesting albeit inactive Climate Change Action Plan, there is a considerable opportunity now to reinvigorate this plan and bring new emphasis on climate change in the Ministry of Health's programs and activities.

Many of the workshop participants expressed an intention to continue learning about climate change and how it affects the health sector, and to educate their colleagues and the community/patients also about how climate change can affect people's health, and what kinds of precautionary actions are needed. Clearly, with this level of engagement there will be a need for on-going professional development activities for Ministry of health staff, as well as access to climate change awareness resources for health workers to use in health education activities.

The GCCA+ can provide some support for the implementation of further training and the development of awareness materials and will engage in further discussions with the organising team to decide on next steps.

ANNEX A – WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

Name	Gender	Organisation
Invitees/Leadership		
Jean-Paul Adam	M	MoH
Anselmine Cafrine	F	PNOCH
John Dubel	M	
Gylian Mein	F	CNO
Patricia Rene	F	CAHO
Participants		
Merna Amade	F	Public Health Services
Monia Course	F	Public Health Services
Kerina Jean-Baptiste	F	Public Health Services
Sherley Figaro (Marcel)	F	Public Health Services
Fanella Zoe	F	Public Health Services
Angie Denys	F	Public Health Services
Alvina Athanse	F	Public Health Services
Charlotte Chetty	F	Public Health Services
Sanny Didon	M	Public Health Services
Anna-Belle Cadeau	F	UPCCD
Anita Bonne	F	DSRU
Chantal Rath	F	DSRU
Venessa Herminie	F	Doctor
Teresa Jack	F	Doctor
Isha Barreau	F	Doctor
Vivianne Camille	F	Doctor
Tara Pharabeau	F	NIHSS (student)
Lynn Dorasamy	F	NIHSS (student)
Gerve TEEROOMOOJEE	M	NIHSS (student)
Curtis Poris	M	NIHSS (student)
Hamid Pool	M	NIHSS (student)
Dumitriscu Lasplace	M	NIHSS (student)
Chole Pascal	F	NIHSS (student)
Kelly Eibl	F	NIHSS (student)
Samira Brutus	F	NIHSS (student)
Rashiro Reginald	F	NIHSS (student)
Laura Appasamy	F	NIHSS (student)
Tellsha Labiche	F	NIHSS (student)
Elinda Anacoura	F	NIHSS (student)
Mario Cecile	M	NIHSS (student)
Ebrahim M. Ali	M	NIHSS (staff)
Michael Seleman	M	NIHSS (staff)
Jeanne D'arc Suzette	F	NIHSS (staff)
Patricia Baquero	F	NAC
Soumita Lesperance	F	A&E
Lindy Lucas	F	Midwifery
Serge Bonne	M	D'offay ward
Jacqueline Betsy	F	Mental Health Services
Vicky Delpêche	F	Community health

Jeanine Arrisol	F	Community health
Stephanie Charlette	F	Community health
Sylvie Pool	F	Doctor
Additional		
Joel Edmond	M	Nutrition Unit
Sophie Morgan	F	MEECC
Annie Mousmie	F	Nurse/ Occupational Health
Presenters/Organisers		
Peter Brinn	M	GCCA+ Consultant
Iris Carolus	F	GCCA+ Consultant
Michele Martin	F	GCCA+ Consultant
Shobha Hajarnis	F	Consultant
Conrad Shamlaye	M	Chief Policy Adviser
Sanjeev Pugazhendi	M	Doctor

ANNEX B – WORKSHOP PHOTOS



Top: participants represented management, doctors, nurses, public and community health workers as well as students and lecturers at the National Institute for Health and Social Services.

Middle: public health workers engaged in group work discussions

Bottom left: SIT group in discussion, Bottom right: presentation of certificates to participants

NATIONAL NEWS

"Climate change is a fact, the evidence is all around, and time is running out," Health Minister Jean-Paul Adam told 60 health workers who took part in a one-day session yesterday to learn more on climate change and how best to plan for and to better address its impacts on human health.

Policy makers, doctors, nurses, other allied health professionals and students from the National Institute of Health and Social Studies (NIHSS) all came together at the Sheikh Khalifa Diagnostic Centre of the Seychelles Hospital to follow the education and awareness session which was organised by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+) Initiative and the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change.

The health workers discussed the challenges of climate change and how the health sector can better adapt and cope with its impacts on all aspects of our population's health.

The workshop, a first of its kind for the Ministry of Health, also took place within the context of the ministry's

'Health in All Policies' agenda.

Workshop coordinator, Dr Sanjeev Pugazhendhi said that GCCA+ believes Seychelles' health sector lacks some capacity to respond to natural disasters and to handle climate-related epidemics.

Thus the main objective of the session which was to get those taking part to understand climate change and its effect on Seychelles and to explore how the health sector will be affected in the short and long term and to propose strategies to reduce the negative impacts.

It was also to explore the needs and options to develop and deliver further specialists' capacity building for health professionals.

GCCA+ team leader for Seychelles, Peter Brinn led the training session

and gave a brief introduction on climate change and climate change screening of the Health Strategy 2010-2020; Dr Shobha Hajarnis gave an overview of our health perspective; Dr Conrad Shamlaye talked on how risk is managed in the health sector, and another GCCA+ representative, Michele Martin gave an insight on the impact of climate change on Seychelles.

Minister Adam said even though Seychelles is a minor contributor to climate change, we are uniquely vulnerable to its impact.

"As islanders, we know what's at stake. Our ability to make it in the world, our ability to care for our citizens, our ability to thrive, it is all at risks. Most economic activities in

Health workers enhance understanding of climate change

Seychelles are along the coast. The major pillars of our economy, namely tourism and fisheries, are particularly vulnerable to climate change-related events like storms, floods, sea level and temperature rise," Minister Adam added.

The minister further said that climate change creates triple burden through direct injuries and deaths, indirect increase in communicable and non-communicable diseases and deterioration in social determinants of health. He said our health system is already facing health challenges from impact of climate change such as the dengue fever which is still affecting the country since its outbreak in 2015.

With most of our primary healthcare facilities on the coastline, prone to

floods and sea level rise, thus maybe unable to function fully after natural disasters, when most needed, Minister Adam stressed.

Meanwhile, Dr Pugazhendhi said the dengue fever outbreak which has been going on in the country for the last three years could have been impacted from the effect of climate change due to changes in the rain pattern.

"Nearly 7,000 people have been affected with dengue. Before, when we had a dengue outbreak it quickly vanished after three months because the rain was falling periodically after three to four months, but now it rains every now and then which gets to keep the mosquitos carrying the virus going," Dr Pugazhendhi said.

