

Building Climate Resilience in the Health Sector in Developing Countries: Experience from Tanzania

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Abstract : Introduction: Public health has always been influenced by climate and weather. Changes in climate and climate variability, particularly changes in weather extremes affect the environment that provides people with clean air, food, water, shelter, and security. Tanzania is not an exception to the threats of climate change. The health sector is mostly affected due to emergence and proliferation of infectious diseases, thereby affecting health of the population and thus impacting achievement of sustainable development goals. Methodology: A desk review on documented issues pertaining to climate change and health in Tanzania was done using Google search engine. Keywords included climate change, link, health, climate initiatives. In cases where information was not available, documents from Ministry of Health, Vice Presidents Office-Environment, Local Government Authority, Ministry of Water, WHO, research, and training institutions were reviewed. Some of the reviewed documents from these institutions include policy brief papers, fieldwork activity reports, training manuals, and guidelines. Results: Six main climate resilience activities were identified in Tanzania. These were development and implementation of climate resilient water safety plans guidelines both for rural and urban water authorities, capacity building of rural and urban water authorities on implementation of climate-resilient water safety plans, and capacity strengthening of local environmental health practitioners on mainstreaming climate change and health into comprehensive council health plans. Others were vulnerability and adaptation assessment for the health sector, mainstreaming climate change in the National Health Policy, and development of risk communication strategy on climate. In addition information, education, and communication materials on climate change and to create awareness were developed aiming to sensitize and create awareness among communities on climate change issues and its effect on public health. Conclusion: Proper implementation of these interventions will help the country become resilient to many impacts of climate change in the health sector and become a good example for other least developed countries.

Keywords : climate, change, Tanzania, health

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