



Inter-Parliamentary Union  
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## Webinar series: Health in climate emergencies #2

# Health equity in climate emergency response

25 January 2024, 14:00 – 15:00 CET

### Concept note

#### Background

The growing impacts of climate change on health are well-recognized, and these impacts are exacerbated in emergency situations. The climate crisis is increasing the number of emergencies as well as the number of people affected by them. Access to essential health services, mental health services, safe drinking water and sanitation, as well as food security, and protection from violence and sexual abuse are all jeopardized in emergency situations. As climate change worsens, climate-related displacement is increasing, which further undermines access to health services and worsens health outcomes, particularly for the most vulnerable groups in society. Equitable access to health services during emergencies requires an understanding of factors of vulnerability (underlying socio-economic factors, factors relating to climate vulnerability or emerging in emergency settings) and targeted strategies and interventions.

The need for stronger inter-linked climate and health policies is clear. At the recent United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), the first-ever Health Day was organized and the [COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate and Health](#) was endorsed by over 120 countries. This Declaration aims to ensure better health outcomes in the face of climate change, including by transforming health systems to be climate-resilient and equitable, by improving the ability of health systems to anticipate risks, and by bolstering climate-health information services and early warning and response systems.

Parliaments have a role to play across the emergency management cycle to enshrine equity and right-to-health principles in legislation and emergency response plans, engage communities – especially climate vulnerable ones – and ensure oversight of emergency response from an equity perspective. Through their representative roles, parliamentarians are instrumental in understanding community health priorities and ensuring local populations are able to anticipate and cope with health risks in climate-related emergency situations.

This webinar is the second of a series organized by the IPU on health in climate emergencies to help parliaments more effectively address the health-climate change nexus.

#### Focus and objectives

The webinar will reflect on how to put the health equity principle into practice, taking into account climate change and its consequences. It will discuss how best to engage at all stages of emergency management to ensure more effective responses to health equity challenges.

The specific objectives of the webinar are to:

- Provide guidance on how to identify and target groups and communities most at risk of facing barriers and inequalities in accessing health services during emergencies;
- Discuss how vulnerabilities created by climate change are affecting health equity;
- Identify entry points for parliaments and parliamentarians to protect and promote health equity at different stages of emergency management;
- Identify the specific areas of interest and needs of parliaments.

The webinar is open to all interested parliamentarians and parliamentary staff. It will take place on the Zoom platform. There will be simultaneous interpretation into English, French and Spanish.

### Provisional programme

14:00 – 14:05 CET	Welcome
14:05 – 14:35	Health equity challenges in climate emergencies – voices from the field The presentations will be followed by an interactive discussion.
14:35 – 14:55	Protecting vulnerable groups in emergency response The presentation will be followed by a Q&A with the participants.
14:55 – 15:00	Conclusion