



In March/April 2019 extreme rainfall and widespread floods in Islamic Republic of Iran caused severe damage to municipal facilities, including health centres and hospitals (Photo: WHO). Tehran 22 October 2019 – The Centre for Environmental and Occupational Health of the Iranian Ministry of Health and Medical Education, with the support of WHO, hosted a workshop on the assessment of health vulnerability to climate change in Tehran on 22 and 23 October 2019. The workshop was a first step in developing a national climate change adaptation plan for the health system, and in developing and operationalizing health policy on climate change through coordination between the health and non-health sectors. An assessment of the vulnerability of the country's health system to climate change is being conducted to strengthen its capacity to cope with the impact of climate change on health, including occupational health, noncommunicable diseases, vector-borne diseases, water and foodborne diseases, climate-related disasters, and air pollution.

Dr Michele Faberi, an international expert on climate change and health vulnerability assessments, facilitated the capacity-building workshop, which included the sharing of global knowledge and experience with a national team of experts, in collaboration with the Institute for Environment Research of Tehran University of Medical Sciences.

“Climate change vulnerability assessment in countries is an opportunity for them to improve resilience and better plan for development according to rigorous data and evidence”, said Dr Michele Faberi.

Dr Rahim Taghizadeh, from the WHO country office, emphasized the importance of close collaboration between the health and non-health sectors in this process, saying that the collaborative exercise had given “momentum to developing a comprehensive data- and evidence-based adaptation plan for the health system”.

Climate change is leading to changes in the average daily temperature, weather conditions (increase of precipitation and extreme heat waves), water levels (decreases in groundwater and surface water, floods and rises in sea levels), climatic conditions (increases in sand and dust storms), and seasonal animal migration periods. The health impacts of these changes are not only related to worsening air quality, extreme cold and hot weather conditions, and agricultural changes, but are also linked to the associated stress and anxiety, animal-related infections, and flooding and water contamination.

Since climate change is a global threat to humanity and has serious impacts on health, well-being, livelihoods and societies, WHO has been involved in identifying the health impacts of climate change and in undertaking advocacy and developing guidelines for the protection of health from climate change.

[Climate change and health](#)

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