

Climate change and health emergencies



Cairo, 7 December 2022 – While responding to multiple concurrent emergencies in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, WHO has simultaneously extended massive support to 5 countries in the Region affected by climate change in 2022 – Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen.

With environmental and climatic risks responsible for around 23% of the total burden of disease in the Region, “The links between climate change, severe weather events and health are increasingly evident, including drought and floods,” Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, said during a recent visit to Sudan. This is one of the 7 countries in the Greater Horn of Africa – along with Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda – affected by severe food insecurity due to drought, a climatic event with devastating consequences on health.

In his opening remarks at the 69th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean held in Cairo on 10–13 October 2022, WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus noted that, “Even as we respond to the emergency in Pakistan, we must remember that unless we address the existential threat of climate change, we will be responding to emergencies like this and worse more often.”

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