

CONCEPT NOTE

4TH ARIN ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE On Climate and Health



06-08
NOV
2024



Nairobi, Kenya



THEME

**BRIDGING KNOWLEDGE GAPS: PROMOTING
TRANS-DISCIPLINARITY FOR CLIMATE AND
HEALTH RESILIENCE**

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The Africa Research and Impact Network (ARIN)'s annual international conference brings together an international community of scholars, policymakers, and practitioners to reflect on the implications of the global challenges on the African continent and options for responding to these challenges inclusively and sustainably. This year, ARIN will hold its 4th International Conference whose theme will be Bridging Knowledge Gaps: Promoting Transdisciplinarity for Climate and Health Resilience. The conference will be held in hybrid mode from 6th to 8th November 2024, organized by the Africa Research and Impact Network (ARIN).

ARIN is a consortium of over 200 researchers and policymakers with national focal points across 36 African countries. ARIN also draws from a database of over 3000 stakeholders from universities, think tanks, the private sector, and governments.



ARIN's mission is to promote research excellence and dialogue on best research and impact practices, by providing platforms for science-policy interface in Africa, building on evidence. ARIN recognizes that Africa is endowed with diverse researchers, innovation, and best policy practices that are not in the public domain yet are invaluable in the research and development agenda of the continent. ARIN therefore provides a peer review platform where best research and impact practices from different African contexts, are shared, profiled, and leveraged to inform transformative policy action. Among the areas that ARIN has pioneered path-breaking research are climate change, knowledge management, science technology, health and innovation. The network currently convenes research and policy platforms on climate action, drawing from the perspective of researchers on, adaptation, science and technology, and innovation status in Africa. Through the same approach, ARIN assesses opportunities for science-policy interface, through contextual projects on research commercialization, innovation, knowledge translation, and practice.

The Climate and Health conference emphasizes the need for stakeholders from diverse sectors and across the different government levels to work together to address the climate crisis that is greatly impacting health outcomes. It will provide a platform where groundbreaking research, policy, innovative ideas, and collaborative efforts converge to foster an understanding of how the actions of the various sectors contribute to climate change, which affects health outcomes, and the measures that need to be taken to safeguard global health.

The conference is structured around different sub-themes and allows scholars to present their work and engage with other experts that could ignite novel ideas and collaborations. The conference is a call to action for researchers, policymakers, CBOs, practitioners, funders, and all relevant actors in the climate and health space to shift from the silo working approach and explore potential ways of working together. Transdisciplinary approaches to climate and health foster holistic and innovative solutions by integrating knowledge and methods from multiple disciplines. This collaboration is crucial for addressing the complex and interconnected challenges posed by climate change and its impacts on health. By promoting transdisciplinary approaches, we can develop more effective and sustainable solutions to the intertwined challenges of climate change and health, ultimately leading to healthier and more resilient communities globally.



RATIONALE FOR THE CONFERENCE

Global developmental challenges have grown increasingly complex and multisectoral and cannot be effectively addressed by a single sector or institution. Given that the health impacts of climate change originate from diverse issues that interact with one another, a need exist to factor in aspects beyond the health sector. The interconnectedness of the components of the health sector highlights the complexities that must be unpacked if an all-inclusive health-climate adaptation is to be realized. However, climate change and health research is often compartmentalized across various disciplines, resulting in a fragmented landscape of specialized discussions. This compartmentalization hinders efforts to synthesize key findings aimed at identifying trends and gaps in the evidence.

Silo working can hinder progress in several ways:

Fragmented Understanding: When researchers and practitioners work in silos, they may have limited understanding of how climate change impacts health and vice versa. For example, climate scientists may focus on environmental impacts without considering health outcomes, while health professionals may overlook the role of climate in disease patterns.

Missed Opportunities for Synergy: Collaboration across disciplines can lead to innovative solutions that address both climate change mitigation/adaptation and health promotion simultaneously. Silo working misses out on the potential synergies that could arise from integrating expertise and perspectives from diverse fields.

Ineffective Policy and Interventions: Policies and interventions developed in isolation may be less effective or even counterproductive. For instance, a climate change adaptation strategy that doesn't consider health implications might inadvertently exacerbate health risks, such as heat-related illnesses or vector-borne diseases.

Limited Capacity Building: Working in silos can hinder capacity building efforts, as opportunities for interdisciplinary learning and skill development are missed. Building resilience to climate change impacts on health requires a multidisciplinary approach that incorporates knowledge from environmental sciences, public health, social sciences, and policy.

Consequently, to overcome silo working in climate change and health, it is essential to promote transdisciplinary approaches. By breaking down silos and fostering collaboration, we can better address the complex challenges at the intersection of climate change and health, ultimately enhancing resilience and promoting sustainable development. Promoting transdisciplinary climate change and health research in Africa is essential for addressing the continent's unique challenges, building local capacity, informing policy decisions, fostering innovation, and contributing to global efforts to tackle the impacts of climate change on public health.

The conference aims to encourage discussions, collaborations, and innovations across disciplines to advance understanding and action on the critical nexus of Climate Change and Health. It suggests a collaborative approach that transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries to foster innovative solutions and enhance resilience in the face of climate-related health risks.



CONFERENCE OUTLOOK

4TH ANNUAL ARIN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Theme: Bridging Knowledge Gaps: Promoting Trans-disciplinarity for Climate and Health Resilience

Pre-Conference Events

CAPCHA Launch

Climate and Health Validation Workshop

Best Practices in C&H Policy Development

Conference

Sub-Theme 1 (Day 1)

Sub-Theme 2 (Day 2)

Sub-Theme 3 (Day 3)

- Main Plenary
- Side Events
- Research Papers



Conference Sub-themes

1. The Status of Climate Change & Health Research and Impact in Africa.
2. Opportunities for Enhancing Transdisciplinary C & H Research and Impact in Africa.
3. Strengthening Funding Opportunities for Transdisciplinary C & H Research and Impact in Africa.

PRE-CONFERENCE EVENTS

Event 1: Launch of CAPCHA: Consultative Platform on Climate and Health in Africa (CAPCHA) – 28th August 2024

The transformation needed to address the health impacts of climate change in Africa demands innovative approaches of mobilizing resources, working jointly, and applying knowledge. To efficiently address the diverse C & H challenges as well as the varied needs and interests of actors in the different sectors, research must be effectively interlinked with policymaking, planning, and action. The co-generation of data across disciplines is one approach that can foster such transformations. By providing timely and policy-relevant research, researchers can support evidence-based decision-making and effective implementation of climate and health policies.

The CAPCHA platform aims to bring together researchers, policymakers, and practitioners from various disciplines and sectors working on the climate and health nexus. The platform will facilitate knowledge exchange, sharing of best practices, and collaboration on research and policy development. The platform will also be used to encourage regular communication channels such as meetings, conferences, and webinars to help foster dialogue and information sharing between different stakeholders. This will ensure that C & H stakeholders are up-to-date with the latest research, policy updates, and field experiences. Information on the connection between climate and health will equally be provided on the platform as most people view them separately.

Event 2: Climate and Health Validation Workshop: Enabling Transdisciplinary Research and Action in Health and Climate Change in Africa - 20th September 2024

Africa is subjected to multiple and complex human health challenges attributed to climate change. The increasing severity of climate change impacts on health-determining sectors (e.g. agriculture, food security, energy, disaster risks and broader social status) needs to be understood and tackled through multi-sectoral approaches. The climate and health policy discourse has particularly taken a paradigm shift- advocating for health to be at the centre of climate change decisions informative to integrated and multisectoral National health resilience plans and National Adaptation Plans. The needed multi-sectoral approaches require collaboration between researchers, policymakers, and implementation partners to address climate-related health issues. However, these collaborations remain nascent, particularly in Africa, where only a fraction of research funding; a meagre 0.5% of multilateral climate adaptation funds are allocated to the health sector, highlighting a stark inadequacy while climate and health stakeholders still work in silos (Turner et al., 2024). There is urgent need for TDR that informs integrated solutions.

The primary purpose of this event is to showcase some emerging examples of TDR research and action in Africa which can inform further research investments. The session will be inspired by the learnings from the Wellcome-funded consultations on Transdisciplinary Research and Action in Health and Climate Change in Africa. Authors drawn from different African contexts and have submitted abstracts submitted for the Conference will showcase their research ideas, rationale and impact opportunities.



Event 3: Best Practices in C & H Policy Development - 17th October 2024

Advancing the Climate and Health agenda in Africa will depend on how well the linkages between research, policy, and society are strengthened in addition to tackling existing inequalities in research. C & H policy documents play a crucial role in guiding strategic action. They establish clear priorities and goals for addressing the intersection of climate change and health. They articulate the objectives of government agencies, international organizations, and other stakeholders in tackling climate-related health risks. Currently, however, African countries appear to have national climate change policy and national adaptation plan documents that only alludes to Climate and Health in barely a sentence/paragraph. Regional adaptation plans for different countries, therefore, have to be co-developed to facilitate policy interventions.

The aim of this webinar is to showcase example of African countries that have successfully integrated health considerations into their national plans and provide opportunities for cross-learning.

CONFERENCE SUB-THEMES

Day 1: The Status of Climate Change & Health Research and Impact in Africa

There is increasing awareness of the interconnectedness between climate change and health across the globe. However, Africa remains to be a continent extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which significantly affect public health. The region experiences extreme weather events, fluctuating temperatures, and varying precipitation patterns, all of which contribute to health challenges such as the spread of infectious diseases, food insecurity, water scarcity, and increased incidence of heat-related illnesses. Currently, there are ongoing efforts to enhance research and action to mitigate the health impacts of climate change. National and regional bodies are beginning to prioritize these issues in their agendas. Various countries have launched national climate and health action plans. For instance, South Africa and Kenya have developed frameworks addressing the health impacts of climate change. However, more still needs to be done.

This sub-theme will aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of climate change and health research in Africa, emphasizing opportunities for impactful interventions and collaboration to build resilient health systems in the region. It will inspire stakeholders to prioritize this critical intersection in their agendas and foster dialogue towards sustainable solutions.

Keynote Questions

- ? How do climate change impacts vary across different regions of Africa, and what are the specific health challenges faced by each region?
- ? Are there examples of successful climate change adaptation strategies that have positively impacted health outcomes in specific African countries or communities? What lessons can be learned from these case studies to inform future interventions?

Panel Questions

- ? What are the current gaps in data availability and quality regarding climate change and health impacts in Africa?
- ? How can capacity building initiatives be scaled up to strengthen research capabilities and data collection efforts across the continent?
- ? What role can policymakers play in integrating climate change adaptation into national health agendas in African countries?
- ? How can advocacy efforts be enhanced to prioritize climate change and health on regional and international platforms?

- ? What strategies are effective in raising awareness about the intersection of climate change and health at the grassroots level?
- ? What are the ethical issues arising when conducting research and implementing projects on Climate Change and Health?

Format



Keynote Address



Case study Presentation



Panel Discussion

Day 2: Opportunities for Enhancing Transdisciplinary Climate & Health Research and Impact in Africa

Enhancing transdisciplinary climate and health research and impact involves addressing unique regional challenges and leveraging diverse expertise to improve resilience and health outcomes. It emphasizes the importance of transdisciplinary research collaborations between environmental scientists, public health experts, policymakers, and community stakeholders among others. Integrated approaches can generate holistic solutions to complex climate-health challenges.

This sub-theme aims to stimulate dialogue and collaboration among diverse stakeholders interested in advancing transdisciplinary approaches to address the complex challenges of climate change and health in Africa. It emphasizes the importance of integrated research, inclusive partnerships, and practical strategies for achieving meaningful impact.

Keynote Questions

- ? What does transdisciplinary research mean in the context of addressing climate change's impacts on health in Africa and why is it important for addressing complex challenges in Africa?
- ? How can different disciplines (e.g., Environmental science, Health and Life sciences, Social sciences, Engineering etc.) collaborate effectively to tackle these interconnected challenges?

Panel Questions

- ? What strategies can be employed to foster meaningful partnerships between academia, government agencies, NGOs, and local communities?
- ? What are the pathways for translating research outcomes into actionable policy recommendations and interventions that promote climate and health resilience in Africa?
- ? How can capacity building initiatives be structured to support transdisciplinary research skills development among African researchers and practitioners?
- ? How can collaborative research platforms and networks facilitate data integration across different disciplines and geographical regions?
- ? How can indigenous knowledge and local perspectives contribute to transdisciplinary research on climate change and health in Africa?

Format



Keynote Address



Case study Presentation



Panel Discussion



Day 3: Strengthening Funding Opportunities for Transdisciplinary Climate & Health Research and Impact in Africa

Securing funding for transdisciplinary climate and health research and impact in Africa can be challenging but is crucial for addressing complex environmental and public health issues. It plays a critical role in advancing transdisciplinary climate and health research and action in Africa by providing the necessary resources and support to tackle complex challenges. It enables the development of context-specific interventions and adaptation strategies tailored to local needs and conditions.

This sub-theme aims to explore practical strategies and actionable recommendations for enhancing funding opportunities for transdisciplinary climate and health research in Africa. It encourages stakeholders to collaborate, innovate, and advocate for sustainable funding solutions that can contribute to addressing pressing challenges in the region.

Keynote Questions

- ? What are the existing funding sources and mechanisms available for transdisciplinary climate and health research in Africa?
- ? How accessible are these funding opportunities to researchers and organizations across different African countries?

Panel Questions

- ? What challenges do researchers face in securing funding for climate change and health research projects?
- ? How do funding criteria and requirements impact the ability to conduct comprehensive trans-disciplinary projects?
- ? How can collaboration between researchers from different disciplines strengthen grant applications and increase success rates?
- ? How can partnerships with international funding agencies and organizations enhance funding opportunities for transdisciplinary research in Africa?
- ? What innovative financing mechanisms (e.g., public-private partnerships, impact investing) could be explored to support transdisciplinary climate and health research in Africa?
- ? How can African countries and regional bodies collaborate to establish sustainable funding models for long-term transdisciplinary research initiatives?
- ? What role can governments, philanthropic organizations, and private sector entities play in supporting sustainable funding for climate and health research?

Format



Keynote Address



Panel Discussion

Donor perspective
Research/policy/capacity/community perspective



CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEE:

This fee covers teas, lunch, refreshments, and conference materials for the entire duration of the conference (3 days) November 6th – 8th 2024.

| Demographics | LICs/LMICs Countries | MICs/HICs Countries |
|---------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Students | 50 USD | 150 USD |
| Researchers | 150 USD | 300 USD |
| Organizations | 300 USD | 400 USD |
| Side events | 500 USD | 500 USD |

PAYMENTS DETAILS

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