

Global Youth for Clean Air and Climate Health Action (Working Group) Community Engagement and Education for the International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies Awareness Day

South Africa, India, Mexico, Rwanda, Indonesia, Nepal, Zambia, Jordan and Cameroon.

September 7, 2021– In support of the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies on September 7, the Global Youth for Clean Air and Climate Health (Working Group), with members being 11 healthcare professionals and clean air advocates majority from the global south; South Africa, India, Mexico, Rwanda, Indonesia, Nepal, Zambia, Jordan and Cameroon. We strive to mobilize global action through advocacy against the generational silence around air pollution and climate health.

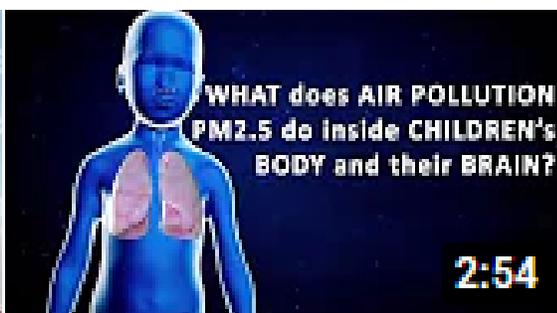
Responsible for more than 7 million premature deaths each year, of whom 600,000 are children. [According to the World Health Organization](#), more than 90% of the world's population lives in areas with air quality levels significantly above the World Health Organization standards. Ambient air pollution alone caused some 4.2 million deaths in 2016, while household air pollution from cooking with polluting fuels and technologies caused an estimated 3.8 million deaths in the same period. Exposure to fine particles in polluted air that penetrate deep into the lungs and cardiovascular system, causing diseases including stroke, heart disease, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases and respiratory infections, including asthma, pneumonia, and more.

Following the international community's increasing interest in clean air, and emphasizing the need to make further efforts to improve air quality to protect human health, the United Nations General Assembly has [designated](#) 7 September as the [International Day of Clean Air for blue skies](#). Last year, the first-ever [International Day of Clean Air for blue skies](#) with the rights-based theme of "Clean Air for All" was launched. The report on the launch and celebration from last year can be viewed [here](#).

The theme for this year's [International Day of Clean Air for blue skies](#) is "Healthy Air, Healthy Planet" which emphasizes the health effects of air pollution, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Day aims to prioritize the need for healthy air for all while keeping conversations broad enough to encompass other critical issues such as climate change, human and planetary health as well as the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). It serves as a rallying call to action to collectively align efforts and claim the right to clean air.

The [UN International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies](#) is an excellent opportunity to raise awareness for people affected by air pollution and also effective ways for its prevention, the most important measures being the acceleration of access to clean cooking and clean heating, investment in renewable energy instead of fossil fuels, transition to zero emission vehicles, and a coordinated global response that involves victims and healthcare professionals. Communities and families can play an important role through education around prevention of air pollution being a major risk factor for health conditions such as respiratory, cardiovascular and other diseases, as well as worsening the climate crisis.

Official commemorations of the second International Day of Clean Air for blue skies will take place in [Nairobi](#), New York and Bangkok.





International Day
of Clean Air
for blue skies



To reduce the burden and prevalence of diseases from air pollution, the [UN Secretary General recommends](#) countries, community action and education including:

- Better monitoring that can identify sources of air pollution.
- Evidence-based national legislation that can help meet World Health Organization Air Quality Guidelines.
- Stronger emissions standards on vehicles, power plants, construction and industries can cut pollution.
- Welcome the recent global phase-out of leaded petrol.
- Invest in renewable energy instead of fossil fuels.
- Encouraging people to be screened for air pollution related diseases (asthma, lung cancer, cardiovascular diseases and more)
- Coal use must be phased out.
- Transition to zero emission vehicles.

In addition to encouraging actions that reduce air pollution, a coordination mechanism that mobilizes global resources for in country work must be put in place. [If we want a future where everyone can breathe clean air](#), understanding our work approaches, where partnerships can be built and where gaps need to be filled.

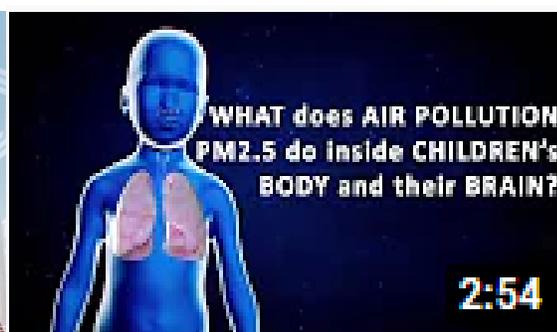
Global partnerships and collaboration is needed urgently if we want people to breathe clean air around the world. The health sector has a leading role to play in communicating the impact of air pollution as well as new strategies needed to be setup for engaging with a sector that is reasonably focused on the pandemic. [The European Respiratory Society](#) has mobilized heart and lung organizations to urge the World Health Organization to publish global air quality guidelines.

When action is taken in a collaborative approach for clean air, we expect governments, individuals, businesses and civil society to respond accordingly. Timely and equitable access to information and coordinated efforts that help people breathe clean air is vital.

About the Global Youth for Clean Air and Climate Health Action (Working Group)

We are 12 healthcare professionals and clean air advocates majority from the global south; South Africa, India, Mexico, Rwanda, Indonesia, Nepal, Zambia, Jordan and Cameroon. This working group comes at a time when the world is struggling to recover from the worst pandemic of this century related to respiratory health, the corona virus. Our resolve to rise for clean air and climate health is needed more than ever. Air pollution disproportionately kills more than 7 million people around the world according to the World health organization in 2016, excluding deaths from direct climate change impacts.

Mr. Shashank Timilsina, is a final year medical student from Nepal. Also an air health trainer with the [World Organization of Family Doctors \(WONCA\)](#). Currently serving as the Finance Assistant for the IFMSA Asia-Pacific Regional Team. **Ms. Chantelle Booyesen** is a global mental health advocate and social impact entrepreneur based in Durban, South Africa. **Ms. Janitra Hapsari** based in Jakarta, Indonesia is a Tobacco Control Youth Activist with 7 years of grassroots movement experience at 9CM (Global No Cigarette Movement) and Mental Health Enthusiast with 2 years' experience of working in formal and informal settings. **Ms. Aadya Murgai** is a health advocate and works with the Health Related, Information Dissemination Among Youths (HRIDAY) India. **Ms. Tina Bhupendra**





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Sharma worked with Mumbai Smiles (NGO India) for almost 5 years and involved in some of their activities and functions. Currently volunteering with APYLAV as an Operational head (International affairs). **Dr. Christophe Ngendahayo** is a Medical doctor with the Ministry of Health Rwanda. He is also an air health trainer with the [World Organization of Family Doctors \(WONCA\)](#). Working Party on the Environment. **Ms. Rosario Hernandez** is a global health expert with interest in tobacco control advocacy. Rosario has over 6 years of working experience with Refleacciona con Responsabilidad on youth mental health. **Ms. Rahmeh Abu** is a global youth health advocate and member of the The Royal Health Awareness Society of Jordan. She is also a graduate student with major in Public Health at the University of Washington. **Dr. Kanika Kishore** is a health communication specialist and works at the University of Delhi India. **Ms. Nsamwa Chitindi** is a social worker and mental health advocate, working with Tobacco Free-Association of Zambia (TOFAZA) as a volunteer since 2011, but currently working as Community Engagement Officer. **Mr. Elvis Ndikum** based in Yaounde, Cameroon is Founder/President at Association for the Promotion of Youth Leadership, Advocacy and Volunteerism Cameroon (APYLAV), also an air health trainer with the [World Organization of Family Doctors \(WONCA\)](#). Finally, our advisor **Ms. Prachi Kathuria**, Project manager at Health Related, Information Dissemination Among Youths (HRIDAY) India.

The goal of the Global Youth for Clean Air and Climate Health Action is striving to mobilize global action through advocacy against the generational silence around air pollution and climate health. As well as call on governments to highlight and take ambitious steps to protect the health of youth from the devastating effects of air pollution exacerbated by climate change.

