

International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies fact sheet

Air pollution continues to be one of the leading risk factors for morbidity and mortality worldwide, claiming more lives yearly than alcohol, physical inactivity, overweight and obesity all combined. The UN International Day of Clean Air for blue skies is a great opportunity for us all to raise awareness about air pollution dangers on health and the climate crisis, 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.

- 92% of our world is exposed to polluted air causing an estimated 7million premature deaths every year.
- Air pollution is by far a leading avoidable risk factor to health among men, women, young and old.
- Each year more people die from air pollution exposure than from, alcohol, physical inactivity and obesity combined.
- Over the past 6 years, ambient air pollution levels have remained high and approximately stable, with declining concentrations in some part of Europe and in the Americas.
- 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.
- More than 90% of air pollution-related deaths occur in low-and middle-income countries, mainly in Asia and Africa, followed by low-and middle-income countries of the Eastern Mediterranean region, Europe and the Americas.
- Around 3 billion people- more than 40% of the world's population- still do not have access to clean cooking fuels and technologies in their homes, the main source of household air pollution.
- Africa and some of the Western Pacific have a serious lack of air pollution data. For Africa, the database now contains PM measurements for more than twice as many cities as previous versions, however data was identified for only 8 of 47 countries in the region.
- Introducing clean air measures too quickly and without a mandate or consultation can backfire.
- Meeting national targets on air pollution requires effective communication, capacity, funding and devolved power at a local level.
- Within national and local governments, air quality sits across different departments, making coordination- and a shared agenda- hard to achieve.
- Poverty forces people to live close to sources of pollution, like factories and highways.

- Prioritizing healthy air for all, while keeping the conversation broad enough to encompass other critical issues such as climate change, human and planetary health.
- Air pollution a two-fold problem with health and climate impacts.
- One in three countries in the world lack any legally mandated standards for air quality

Sources:

<https://www.cleanairblueskies.org/>

https://www.stateofglobalair.org/resources?resource_category=factsheet

<http://www.healthdata.org/news-release/avoidable-risk-factors-take-increasing-toll-health-worldwide>

<https://www.ccacoalition.org/en/news/world-health-organization-releases-new-global-air-pollution-data>

<https://www.cleanairfund.org/blog-post/2020-lessons/>

<https://www.cleanairblueskies.org/statement/message-international-day-clean-air-blue-skies-un-secretary-general-antonio-guterres>

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/clean-air-day>

<https://www.unep.org/>

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 serve 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 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.

Get Involved

Help spread the message about the International Day of Clean Air for blue Skies:

- Join the Celebration of the 2nd International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies-Nairobi, [Kenya](#)
- Watch: Air pollution and Health-WHO Breathlife2030
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GVBey1jSG9Y>

[We would like to invite you to join some exciting events that UNICEF is hosting/supporting:](#)

- **UNICEF LACRO & HQ will Launch the “Air Quality - It's Time to Act!” booklet on Sept. 7th at 14:00 CT, 15:00 ET, 19:00 GMT.** Please join us for the launch of the Air Quality - It's Time to Act!, booklet which is part of UNICEF's [Toolkit for young climate activists](#). This event will be held, within the framework of the International Day of Clean Air for a Blue Sky, with exciting speakers including: Sandra Cavalieri (CCAC); Sean Maguire (Clean Air Fund); Marcelo Mena (Former Environment Minister, Chile), Ismaela Magliotto (Youth Climate Activist, Chile), and Alejandro Daly (Toolkit co-author). See flyer attached, and [here](#).
- **Register here: <https://unicef.zoom.us/j/91561243114>**
- **UNICEF EAPRO will also be supporting the session "Clean air for all: Strengthening women and children's engagement"** which will raise awareness on the impacts of air pollution on children, women, and vulnerable groups, and promote clean air solutions on **Sept. 8th 13:30-15:00 (UTC+7)** with excellent panelists, see flyer attached, and [here](#). **Register here: <https://cleanairweek.org/register/>**

- UNICEF EAPRO are finalising the Child-Centered Clean Air Solutions report and plan to have it publicly shareable by next week – and will share the link to the uploaded document once it is available.
- We hope you can join and please share with your colleagues, partners, and networks!

