

**CSD-19 learning Center  
On  
Chemicals Issues of Importance for Sustainable  
Development**

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**Health and Environment Linkage**

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# THE LIBREVILLE DECLARATION ON HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES IN AFRICA

***ADDRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL RISK  
FACTORS TO HUMAN HEALTH AND  
ECOSYSTEM INTEGRITY***

# Key issues and challenges

- Developing countries bear the economic costs of lost productivity, a burden on the health sector, a burden from degraded environmental resources, and also long-term social consequences
- Yet at country level, few institutions have developed operational policies and programmes that recognize health and environment linkages and make them an essential component of health and environment sector policies, macroeconomic policy and development decisions.

## Key challenges include:

- Health Promotion and community education for basic hygiene and sanitation yet to achieve impact;
- Rampant poverty exacerbating risky behaviour and attitudes;
- Knowledge generated on health and environment linkages poorly communicated to policy makers;
- Lack of awareness on existing cost-effective interventions;
- Competing priorities in policy making;

# Key challenges-Contd.

- Health and environment ineffectively built and inadequately distributed;
- Shortage of manpower;
- Lack of incentive for career development for staff;
- Lack of sustained efforts to develop cost-effective interventions;
- Deployment and impact of these interventions hampered by insufficient basic public awareness as well as weak and ineffective policies;
- Countries in Africa have so far implemented fragmented and uncoordinated policies on issues of environmental determinants of health;
- There is a disconnect between health programmes and programmes in other sectors that drive environmental risk factors to human health.

# What is the Libreville Declaration?

- The Libreville Declaration on Health and Environment in Africa(2008), is a policy statement that provides a cohesive and integrated framework to coherently address health and environment linkages.
- The Libreville Declaration is intended to become the overarching framework under which health and environment linkages will be addressed coherently with a view to secure the political commitment for catalyzing the policy, institutional and investment changes required to reduce threats to health in support of sustainable development .
- The Libreville Declaration is a set of 11 priority actions to which 52 African Governments committed themselves to, in order to protect health and preserve the African ecosystems

# **Governments committed to:**

1. Establishing a health-and-environment strategic alliance , as the basis for plans of joint action.
2. Integrating of health and environment linkages into policies, strategies, regulations and national development plans.
3. Implementing priority Intersectoral programmes at all levels, aimed at accelerating achievement of Millennium Development Goals.
4. Establishing or strengthening health and environment institutions.
5. Supporting knowledge acquisition and management to identify knowledge gaps and research priorities and to support education and training at all levels..

# **Governments committed to:**

6. Establishing or strengthening systems for health and environment surveillance to identify emerging risks, in order to manage them better.
7. Enforcing compliance with international conventions.
8. Setting up national monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess performance in implementing priority programmes.
9. Instituting the practice of systematic assessment of health and environment risks.
10. Developing partnerships for targeted and specific advocacy on health and environment issues.
11. Achieving a balance in the allocation of national budgetary resources for Intersectoral health-and-environment programmes.

# The Roadmap toward Luanda

## Objectives for the period 2009-2010:

1. Support the establishment of the Health and Environment Strategic Alliance.
2. Support the development of national plans of joint action.
3. Facilitate the establishment of a resource mobilization and coordination mechanism to support country plans.
4. Support the establishment of an African Network on surveillance of communicable and non communicable diseases.
5. Support the organization of the second interministerial conference on health and environment in Africa.

# The Health and Environment Strategic Alliance (HESA)

## Proposed Mission

To implement the Libreville Declaration at *national* and *international* levels by *coordinating actions* by the health and environment sectors *within the development planning processes* in order to effectively value and utilize health and environment linkages for protecting and promoting public health and ecosystem integrity and in view of achieving development goals.

# The HESA

## *At the country level*

- Steer and execute a continued process of situation analysis and needs assessment;
- Facilitate identification of national priorities;
- Develop national plans of joint action;
- Provide guidance for the formulation of specific projects deriving from the national plans of joint action;
- Monitor and evaluate progress;
- Undertake advocacy and resource mobilization.

# The HESA

## *At the international level*

Support country efforts through advocacy, resource mobilization, capacity building, technical support and progress monitoring.

### **Objectives:**

- To ensure that sufficient technical and financial resources are available to countries to meet the objectives and targets set in their plans of joint action.
- To ensure that the priority actions contained in the Libreville Declaration remain on top of the policy and strategic agenda of countries and their partners
- To provide guidance and support to countries for the assessment and management of environmental risk factors for human health and ecosystem degradation.
- To assess, document and disseminate progress made in the implementation and impact of the Libreville Declaration.

# Situation Analysis and Needs Assessment (SANA)

- The SANA addresses the full array of environmental health determinants, the drivers that determine their associated risk levels and the management of these risks.
- The SANA considers national policies and legislation, technical and institutional capacities, existing and potential intersectoral coordination mechanisms and available resources.
- The SANA utilizes a standardized structure and approach to allow comparability of results between countries, to add up or extrapolate to a regional or continental picture.

# Situation Analysis and Needs Assessment (SANA)

- The SANA results in a national report that provides a strong evidence base.
- The national report is reviewed by the key deciders in relevant ministries during the prioritization workshop during which draft national priorities are proposed.
- The national SANA report is endorsed by the government and their partners during the national consensus meeting.

# SANA Status

The JTT provided technical support to 17 African countries to undertake their SANAs as well as to prepare their NPJAs.

**Table 1: Status of Libreville Declaration implementation**

Country	SANA Status		NPJA Status	
	Started	Completed	Started	Completed
1. Angola	X	X		
2. Cameroun	X	X	X	
3. Congo	X	X		
4. DRC	X	X		
5. Eritrea	X			
6. Ethiopia	X	X		
7. Gabon	X	X	X	
8. Guinea	X			
9. Ghana	X	X		
10. Kenya	X	X	X	
11. Lesotho	X	X		
12. Madagascar	X	X	X	
13. Mozambique	X			
14. Mali	X	X	X	
15. Nigeria	X			
16. Sierra Leone				
17. Tanzania	X	X		

# **ENVIRONMENTAL RISK FACTORS AND RESPONSE SYSTEMS FOR HUMAN HEALTH AND ECOSYSTEM INTEGRITY IN AFRICA”: A synthesis report (UNEP/WHO – October 2010)**

The report:

- Provides a synthesis of the outcomes of the SANA process to date and as such documents the progress achieved by countries in less than two years following the 2008 Libreville Declaration.
- Provides, for the first time, an opportunity to examine an African continent-wide assessment of the state of health and environment linkages in order to reach evidence-based agreements on regional priorities.

# **The Second Inter-Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment in Africa, Luanda – November 2010**

## **General objective:**

The general objective of the Second Inter-Ministerial Conference is to sustain the political commitment made at the Libreville Conference on enhanced intersectoral actions and cobenefits for human health and the environment in support of sustainable development.

## **Specific objectives:**

- (a) To assess the progress made by countries in the implementation of the Libreville Declaration;
- (b) To identify country level actions required to accelerate the implementation of the Libreville Declaration;
- (c) To agree on the continent's health and environment priorities for accelerated investments with a view to achieving MDGs, including areas for the development of intercountry programmes;
- (d) To agree on the mechanisms for coordinating international action in support of countries for implementation of the Libreville Declaration.
- e) To adopt a common position for Africa on climate change and health for the 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to be held in Mexico in December 2010.

# Luanda Outcomes

## The Luanda Commitment:

Outlines Africa's **health and environment priorities** and commits countries to take actions to address them, and accelerate the implementation of the Libreville Declaration.

*Committed* countries to: **accelerating the implementation of the *Libreville Declaration***, especially because of the effect this will have on the attainment of MDG goals 4, 5, 6 and 7 relating to child health, maternal health, communicable diseases and environmental sustainability respectively.

- Ministers resolved to **complete the Situation Analyses and Needs Assessment (SANA) in all African countries and the preparation of National Plans of Joint Action by the end of 2012** as a way of speeding the implementation of the *Libreville Declaration*.
- So far, SANA has been commenced in 17 African countries and completed in 12.

# Luanda Outcomes

- The ministers also agreed **to mobilise resources available within government budgets and the private sector**, and to advocate for and monitor an allocation of 15% of government budgets to the health sector as stated in the 2001 Abuja Declaration by African Heads of State and a substantial increase of allocations of government budgets to the environment sector.

**Institutionalization of the HESA:** The ministers also formally established the Health and Environment Strategic Alliance (HESA), a novel mechanism that will stimulate policies and investments in favor of enhanced joint actions for health and environment in Africa.

- HESA, the first ever collaboration framework of its type between African countries and two United Nations agencies in Africa, was adopted alongside the other major conference outputs
- Building on the linkages between the health and environment sectors, HESA, now institutionalized, will develop and coordinate actions to effectively protect and promote public health and ecosystem integrity with a view to helping countries attain the Millennium Development Goals.

# Luanda Outcomes

- The HESA will also concretely support country efforts through advocacy, resource mobilization, capacity building, technical assistance as well as progress monitoring, as part of the implementation of the *Libreville Declaration*, adopted in 2008 to reduce environmental threats to human health and well-being.

**The adoption of a *Joint Statement on Climate Change and Health*:** for the first time, African Ministers of Health and Environment made their strongest pronouncement ever on climate change and health in the region.

The ministers decided to implement an essential public health package to enhance the climate change resilience status of all African countries by 2014.

# Initial Outcomes of the Libreville Declaration Implementation Process at the country level

The LDIP has so far enabled:

- Country true ownership
- Enthusiastic participation of national stakeholders
- An unprecedented dialogue on health and environment matters both at policy and technical levels.
- Strengthened intersectoral coordination on policy, regulatory, scientific and technical issues related to health and environment
- Strengthened national competencies and capacities in policy review and analysis as well as on the scientific assessment on health and environment linkages
- Establishment of national databases and building up evidence for identification of gaps in knowledge on health and environment linkages.
- A clear and joint process of identification and validation of national priorities.

# HESA and SANA potential contribution to SMC regime needs

- Provide the needed coordinated mechanism for sound chemicals management with lead agencies designated and working groups to address specific issues.
- Increase capacity to analyze the linkages between chemical management issues and the development priorities of the country, including the economic costs of inaction or benefits of action on chemical management priorities.
- The SANA provide a reference document to be used by many countries to constantly reassess the progress in health and environment and in particular in chemicals management. It also contributes to developing evidenced based SAICM plan of action in the respective countries.
- Need for more comprehensive chemicals legislation

# Conclusion

*It is only by addressing health and environment together that the value of each can be fully appreciated and duly integrated into development agendas for enhanced human well being*

**THANK YOU**