



With the participation of:



When: December 6, 2010 13.20 to 14.40

Where: Pitaya Room, Cancun Messe

Title: Improving resilience to protect human health and welfare from the adverse affects of climate change

Overview:

Human health and welfare are central concerns in climate change. Beyond environmental and economic impacts, the well-being of the human population and the capacity of the human race to survive are at stake. For this reason, World Health Organization and World Food Programme, in collaboration with the Chief Executive Board (CEB), High Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP), Working Group on Climate Change, Social Dimension task team, have been advocating greater consideration of health, nutrition and social issues to be included in climate change discussions.

In this side event WHO, WFP and other UN agencies, including (UNAIDS, OHCHR, UNICEF, ILO) will bring together expertise to identify win-win policies, approaches and programmes that enhance resilience of social protection systems and public health services.

The main purpose of the side event will be to discuss: a) The impacts of climate change on health and nutrition at country level; b) How to enhance human resilience and strengthen national policies and measures to adverse impacts of climate change on health and nutrition; d) How the UN system can support governments in the implementation of their adaptation plans and programme to protect and promote public health.

Event Outline:

Moderator: Mr Alex Kirby, independent journalist

13.20 Javier Hernández Valencia, Representative Mexico office, OHCHR

Presentation on the Human Rights framework in addressing adverse impacts of climate change, in particular, focusing on the right to health, and access to food (5 min.)

Maria Neira, Director of Public Health and Environment Department, WHO

Presentation on Health and Climate Change (5 min.)

Sheila Sisulu, Deputy Executive Director, WFP

Presentation on nutrition and climate change (5 min)

Cristina Tirado, UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN)

Presentation on the role of the UN system in supporting countries to develop their response to address nutrition and health related outcomes of the most vulnerable groups (5 min)

Thompson Kelly, representative at COP16, UNAIDS
Statement on AIDS/nutrition and Climate Change (5 min)

Ana Belen Sanchez, Climate Change Specialist, Green Jobs Programme, ILO
Presentation on improving workers health and mainstreaming labour policies into adaptation to climate change programmes (5 min)

Interactive discussions (30-40 minutes)

Other possible contributions from countries, negotiators, medical associations and donors will be announced on the final programme.

Summary:

" Adverse effects of climate change" means changes in the physical environment or biota resulting from climate change which have significant deleterious effects on the composition, resilience or productivity of natural and managed ecosystems or on the operation of socio-economic systems or on human health and welfare" (Art 1. UNFCCC, 1992). Calorie availability in 2050 is likely to have declined relative to 2000 levels throughout the developing world: 24 million additional malnourished children, 21% more than today, are anticipated (IFPRI, 2009).

The convening agencies will undertake a review of the social considerations within selected national adaptation programmes and facilitate a presentation of the findings at the side event according to the following main aspects:

- Human rights framework in addressing adverse impacts of climate change, in particular, focusing on the right to health and access to food;
- identified social impacts of climate change (i.e. health, nutrition, food security, decent work);
- Countries adaptation needs, proposed adaptation actions and implementation frameworks.

Speakers and invitees will include representatives of the scientific, public health and development policy communities which will participate in a roundtable discussion about the experiences and actions required to protect human wellbeing from adverse impacts of climate change. The involvement of negotiators of different countries will be actively sought. Questions from the floor will be encouraged.

Event Objectives:

- To highlight the importance of social protection, the right to health and access to food and nutrition in the final days of the Climate Change talks and negotiations;
- Raise awareness and public understanding about public health and nutrition and the role of social protection in climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts;
- Spark commitment among governments, international organizations, donors, civil society, youth, businesses and local communities to collaborate effectively on putting the social dimension at the heart of the climate change agenda.

Expected outcome

- To sensitize climate negotiators and senior development officials of the need to take health and nutrition impacts of climate change fully into account in the new climate agreement;

- To provide concrete UN-wide significant strategies and experiences to enhance adaptation/resilience.

Resources:

WHO www.who.int/globalchange/en/

WFP <http://www.wfp.org/climate-change>

CEB <http://www.unsceb.org/ceb/priorities/climate-change/climate-change/>

ILO's talking points (PDF)