



ADAPTATION FUND

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Adaptation Fund Board

**ENDORSEMENT OF GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FINANCING  
CLIMATE AND HEALTH SOLUTIONS**

## Background

1. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 3.3 billion people worldwide are highly vulnerable to climate change and face elevated health risks as a result, with low- and middle-income countries and vulnerable and marginalized communities around the world most deeply impacted.<sup>1</sup>

2. Health is a key focus for the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (COP28), hosted by the United Arab Emirates (UAE). COP28 will be the first COP to have a Health Day and will include the first-ever climate and health ministerial.

The ambition for this is to create momentum for financing institutions and countries to:

- enhance collaboration towards achieving climate change mitigation in line with the health-protective ambition of the Paris Agreement;
- build climate resilient communities and health systems; and
- protect people from the harmful health impacts of climate change

3. The Presidency is looking to launch a set of ***shared guiding principles for financing climate and health solutions***, with the aim to help financing institutions to work together to scale up financing for climate and health solutions and better utilize existing finance to support country-led climate and health goals. The rationale given is that shared guiding principles for finance would support this by:

- recognizing the urgent need to close widening gaps in existing finance for health and for climate change in low and middle income countries;
- building a common understanding of climate-health financing;
- fostering coordination and efficiency across financiers and technical sectors;
- raising high-level political commitment to increase the scale, quality, equity, and impact of climate-health investments; and
- enhancing transparency of finance commitments and flows for climate and health solutions.

4. A preliminary draft of the guiding principles was developed by the COP28 Presidency, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, the Green Climate Fund, The Rockefeller Foundation, and the World Health Organization, and discussed during a roundtable meeting with countries, financing institutions, and civil society organizations during United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2023. The draft principles have now been revised following a series of consultations with financing institutions, including the Adaptation Fund, as well as with country partners, private sector partners, and civil society and implementing organizations.

5. Of note, this included a series of engagements with the WHO's Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH) Finance Working Group in which the Adaptation Fund has been participating actively, including through interventions and presentation of its portfolio which has extensive linkages to health and generates health co-benefits.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> IPCC, 2022: Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

<sup>2</sup> ATACH is a WHO initiative, an informal voluntary network for Participants to exchange views, share information, and enhance technical and political co-operation. It is not a distinct legal entity, and it

6. Through a consultative process, the guiding principles have been drafted to build on and aim to work in alignment with existing development finance principles and mechanisms, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and Paris Climate Agreement. They additionally build on the work of partners to define and accelerate progress towards climate action and climate justice, highlighting the opportunity to protect human health and wellbeing in our climate response.

7. At this stage, the Presidency is primarily seeking endorsement from financing organizations and country representatives. Following COP28, their plan is to look at how best to engage with, and seek endorsement from, the full suite of stakeholders actively contributing to the climate and health solutions.

8. The COP28 Presidency, the Global Fund to Fight AIDs, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, the Green Climate Fund, The Rockefeller Foundation, and the World Health Organization are fully behind the principles and plan to announce them at COP28 in partnership with targeted country representatives and financing organizations.

9. The principles will be launched on December 3, 2023, at the COP28 Health Day. Following COP28, the endorsers will be invited to work together on a 2024 process that can facilitate the routine refinement, application, and monitoring of implementation of the principles. This will ideally be a light touch engagement, for instance through an annual forum/meeting that takes place alongside another global event or virtually. This might also include an effort to publish the principles online and in other outlets (i.e. peer reviewed publications, etc.) and expand the evidence base to suggest the importance of engaging more routinely and deeply on climate-health finance.

### **Secretariat's review of the invitation**

10. The guiding principles were open for feedback through mid to late October, during which time partners were welcome to provide their comments which were integrated to the extent possible. The secretariat reviewed the initial draft and found it to be in line with and relevant to the Fund's mission, vision and goal, as articulated in the Medium-Term Strategy 2023-2027. Furthermore, there are potential direct linkages with the Board's commitment to explore and consider options for addressing novel sector, themes, target groups with high relevance for adaptation, high impact potential and/or relatively low representation in adaptation portfolios to date (Implementation Plan for the MTS-II, see, for example, Activity 3.1 under "Across Pillars"), and the Fund is planning, for example, to support innovation projects and programmes that involve new and non-conventional actors, underserved areas and beneficiaries, or emerging themes.

11. The version now being shared, "Guiding Principles for Financing Climate and Health Solutions" (Annex 1), as of early November 2023, is the final version and, in the interim has been modified somewhat. It has been communicated in the "FAQ on Guiding Principles for Financing

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derives its legal status from WHO. Thus, it shall be administered by WHO, which provides its Secretariat.

Climate and Health Solutions” (Annex 2) in the lead up to a COP28 announcement, is closed for additional edits/comments. This is the version that the originating partners (referenced previously) intend to bring to COP28, alongside endorsing organizations.

12. The principles are not a legally binding document but rather a signal of general agreement with the principles. In the near-term, endorsement or support for the principles could mean:

- agreeing to announce the principles with the originating organizations at COP28;
- referencing the principles in speeches, public statements, and social media around COP28; and
- committing to engage with the principles in the lead up to, and after, COP28.

13. Moreover, endorsement of the shared principles does not signify the commitment to provide financial commitments for climate and health.

14. The Adaptation Fund is committed to supporting the most vulnerable communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change, following the principles of country-drivenness. Where countries would like to access funding for health initiatives in order to adapt to climate change, the Adaptation Fund is already able to consider such requests. Endorsing the principles in time of the Health Day would help elevate Adaptation Fund’s profile and its recognition as a potential source of funding for the health sector. Because the principles are not a legally binding document and as it would not entail committing the Fund’s to providing financial support for climate and health, the Board may wish to endorse the principles.

### **Recommendation**

15. Given the high-level nature of the invitation and following similar invitations in past years, the secretariat recommends that the Board may want to consider and endorse the guiding principles for financing climate and health solutions in time for their official launch at COP28.

16. Should the Board decide to endorse the guiding principles, and to request the secretariat to communicate the endorsement to the COP28 Presidency.

### **Annexes**

1. “Guiding Principles for Financing Climate and Health Solutions”
2. “FAQ on Guiding Principles for Financing Climate and Health Solutions”

Annex 1: “Guiding Principles for Financing Climate and Health Solutions” – Attached

Annex 2: “FAQ on Guiding Principles for Financing Climate and Health Solutions”  
– Attached

## Guiding principles for financing climate change and health solutions

Climate change is one of the greatest health challenges of our time. It is destabilizing health systems, deepening inequities, undermining the social, environmental, and economic foundations of good health, and, ultimately, threatens the lives, health, and wellbeing of communities around the world. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimates that 3.3 billion people worldwide are highly vulnerable to climate change and face greater health risks as a result. There are profound inequities in the burden of climate health risks and impacts, in the ability to adapt to climate change, and in access to finance, with low- and middle-income countries and vulnerable and marginalized communities most deeply affected.

It is imperative that we protect people from the harmful health impacts of climate change by pursuing ambitious mitigation and adaptation goals, preventing the worst climate risks, and building climate resilient communities including critical water, food, and health systems, in line with the Paris Agreement and the “right to health” enshrined within it. Insufficient, fragmented, and inaccessible financing currently jeopardizes such action.

There are opportunities across sectors – from health and energy systems to economic development, agriculture, gender, and beyond – to advance climate and health solutions. Financing partners including development banks, multilateral funds, national governments, philanthropies, and the private sector, play a key role in each of these spaces and thus have a tremendous opportunity to safeguard human health through coordinated action in partnership with countries and communities.

In recognition of the vital need for financing to prevent and protect against the health risks of climate change, and in alignment with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Paris Agreement, and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and wider efforts to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and equity of financing for health and for climate, we support the following guiding principles for financing climate and health solutions:

- 1. Accelerate transformative climate and health solutions to save and improve lives now and in the future.** Early action is essential to address existing health burdens and frailties in health systems, and to curtail emissions to avoid worsening climate risks and the surpassing of adaptation limits. Priority areas include:
  - Rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions to improve health, including through rapid transitions away from fossil fuels, lower air pollution, active mobility, shifts to sustainable diets, and limiting climate change.
  - Implement proactive public health and adaptation measures to build healthy, resilient, adapted communities and protect people from the range of climate risks to health, with an emphasis on the most impacted communities.
  - Build stronger, resilient, and environmentally sustainable health systems, including by delivering universal health coverage and high-quality care to all in a changing climate, enhancing the sector’s preparedness and adaptive capacity, and aligning the sector with global climate ambition by reducing the climate footprint of the health sector.
- 2. Support the health and climate priorities of the most impacted countries and communities** as identified in country-led plans and through partnership with communities, civil society, academia, and local governments. Elevate country ownership and leadership including through support to countries to develop and integrate climate health strategies within national plans and policies.

Collaborate with countries to support resource mobilization and leverage national and international finance for climate and health solutions, respecting countries' differentiated needs and contexts.

3. **Promote an inclusive and equitable approach to financing climate and health solutions.** Meaningfully engage communities and civil society partners in the co-design, development, implementation, and monitoring of finance. Focus resources in the most vulnerable and impacted communities and invest directly in civil society and community-led solutions.
4. **Mobilize a suite of financing from all partners.** Unlock substantial support for ambitious, evidence-based action on climate and health from diverse public and private sources, while avoiding the displacement of funds away from other climate, health, and development efforts or the further fragmentation of funding streams. Work across countries and financing institutions to understand the level and types of finance needed, identify and advance strategies to meet these needs leveraging the strengths of different financing streams, and transparently report financing for climate and health solutions.
5. **Build the core policymaking and implementation capacities of countries, communities, and financing institutions.** Ensure the development of sustainable, resilient, and adaptive systems that can develop and deliver on climate and health plans. Enable the human, technological, social, and other resources needed to ensure the long-term impact of investments in climate and health solutions.
6. **Embed climate and health goals across financing strategies,** targeting finance towards solutions with the greatest positive impact on human lives and wellbeing, based on evidence. Consider the health impacts of climate mitigation and adaptation in all sectors to prioritize solutions that promote health and avoid maladaptation or the deepening of health risks. Leverage health finance to advance climate mitigation and adaptation in the health sector. Maximize the climate and health gains of investments to support efficiencies in light of resource and fiscal constraints.
7. **Enhance equitable access to finance,** including through simplified processes that are coherent, transparent, and predictable, and that increase the accessibility, effectiveness, and speed of finance, while continuing to uphold robust fiduciary, environmental, and social safeguards.
8. **Support holistic approaches** that address compounding climate, health, and development challenges in integrated, not isolated, ways. Foster dialogue and partnership between diverse health and climate stakeholders, including multi-sector financing institutions, to optimally use resources for large-scale impact.
9. **Support innovation and scientific research and development.** Close the gaps on evidence-based and scalable solutions and accelerate the deployment of proven, locally appropriate best practices. Coordinate across sectors to expand climate and health solutions and evaluate their impact, recognizing the urgent need to take early and transformative action.
10. **Promote the alignment of financing for climate and health solutions with broader efforts to transform the international financing system,** including by enabling fiscal reform and promoting the move away from subsidies that are harmful for health and the environment.

## **FAQ for Guiding Principles for Financing Climate and Health Solutions (Nov 2023)**

### **Why are shared guiding principles on climate and health finance needed?**

The WHO has called climate change one of the greatest health challenges of our time. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 3.3 billion people worldwide are highly vulnerable to climate change and face elevated health risks as a result, with low- and middle-income countries and vulnerable and marginalized communities around the world most deeply impacted.

Despite the critical need for action, funding for climate and health falls well short of need, and siloed financing structures have left a critical gap in funding for the solutions at the intersection of climate change and health. Only 0.5% of multilateral climate funding is allocated to projects that explicitly address human health,<sup>1</sup> while just under 5% of climate adaptation funding is committed to health projects.<sup>2</sup> Over 90% of countries include health in their NDCs, and fragmented, hard to access, and insufficient finance is a major barrier for countries seeking to implement climate and health solutions and achieve their climate and health goals.

The bottom line is that, whether it's for existing climate, health, or climate and health financing, or newly mobilized financing, there is an opportunity to use resources more efficiently and effectively in service of the countries and communities that need it most.

### **What is the opportunity?**

Health is a key focus for COP28, hosted by the United Arab Emirates (UAE). COP28 will be the first COP to have a Health Day and will include the first-ever climate and health ministerial. With the climate health crisis upon us, political ambition rising for climate and health action, and organizations stepping up to make new financial commitments for climate and health solutions at COP28, now is an essential moment for financing institutions and countries to:

- enhance collaboration towards achieving climate change mitigation in line with the health-protective ambition of the Paris Agreement;
- build climate resilient communities and health systems; and
- protect people from the harmful health impacts of climate change

### **What can the shared guiding principles achieve?**

Financing institutions can work together to scale up financing for climate and health solutions and better utilize existing finance to support country-led climate and health goals. Shared guiding principles for finance can support this by:

- recognizing the urgent need to close widening gaps in existing finance for health and for climate change in low and middle income countries;
- building a common understanding of climate-health financing;
- fostering coordination and efficiency across financiers and technical sectors;
- raising high-level political commitment to increase the scale, quality, equity, and impact of climate-health investments; and



- enhancing transparency of finance commitments and flows for climate and health solutions.

### **How are the shared guiding principles being developed?**

A preliminary draft of the guiding principles was developed by the COP28 Presidency, the Global Fund to Fight AIDs, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, the Green Climate Fund, The Rockefeller Foundation, and the World Health Organization, and discussed during a roundtable meeting with countries, financing institutions, and civil society organizations during UNGA. The draft principles have now been revised following a series of consultations with country partners, financing institutions, private sector partners, and civil society and implementing organizations. Of note, this included a series of engagements with the WHO's Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH) Finance Working Group. We've aimed to make the process as consultative as possible in order for the shared principles to best represent the needs and priorities of countries and communities and the shared mission and priorities of financing partners.

The guiding principles build on and aim to work in alignment with existing development finance principles and mechanisms, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and Paris Climate Agreement. They additionally build on the work of partners to define and accelerate progress towards climate action and climate justice, highlighting the opportunity to protect human health and wellbeing in our climate response.

### **What does it mean to endorse these principles and does endorsement signify a commitment of financial resources?**

The principles are not a legally binding document. Endorsing the principles simply means that you agree with the direction and content of the principles. In the near-term, endorsement or support for the principles could mean:

- agreeing to announce the principles with the originating organizations at COP28;
- referencing the principles in speeches, public statements, and social media around COP28; and
- committing to engage with the principles in the lead up to, and after, COP28.

Endorsement of the shared principles does not signify the commitment to provide financial commitments for climate and health.

### **What does the endorsement process look like for the guiding principles?**

The guiding principles were open for feedback through mid to late October, during which time partners were welcome to provide their comments which were integrated to the extent possible.

The version now being shared, as of early November 2023, is the final version and, in the lead up to a COP28 announcement, is closed for additional edits/comments. This is the version that

the originating partners (referenced previously) intend to bring to COP28, alongside endorsing organizations.

**Who can endorse the principles and who has endorsed the principles already?**

At this stage, we are primarily seeking endorsement from financing organizations and country representatives. Following COP28, we plan to look at how best to engage with, and seek endorsement from, the full suite of stakeholders actively contributing to the climate and health solutions.

The COP28 Presidency, the Global Fund to Fight AIDs, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, the Green Climate Fund, and The Rockefeller Foundation, and the World Health Organization are fully behind the principles and plan to announce them at COP28 in partnership with targeted country representatives and financing organizations.

**When will the guiding principles be launched?**

The principles will be launched on December 3, 2023, at the COP28 Health Day.

**What happens after the COP28 Health Day announcement?**

Following COP28, the endorsers will be invited to work together on a 2024 process that can facilitate the routine refinement, application, and monitoring of implementation of the principles. This will ideally be a light touch engagement, for instance through an annual forum/meeting that takes place alongside another global event or virtually. This might also include an effort to publish the principles online and in other outlets (i.e. peer reviewed publications, etc.) and expand the evidence base to suggest the importance of engaging more routinely and deeply on climate-health finance.

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<sup>1</sup> WHO. 2021. COP26 Special Report on Climate Change and Health: The Health Argument for Climate Action. Available at: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240036727>.

<sup>2</sup> Alcayna, T, O'Donnell, D, Chandaria, S. How much bilateral and multilateral climate adaptation finance is targeting the health sector? A scoping review of official development assistance data between 2000 - 2019. PLoS Global Public Health. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pgph.0001493>.