

ADDRESSING PLANETARY HEALTH CHALLENGES IN AFRICA

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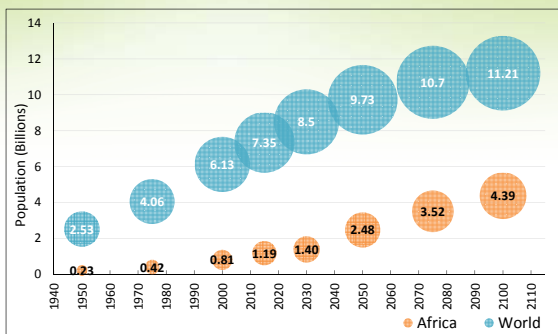
KEY PLANETARY HEALTH CHALLENGES IN AFRICA

Some of the challenges are also opportunities



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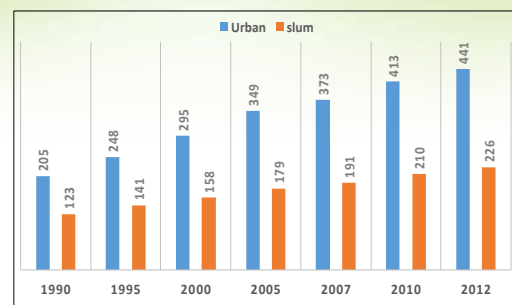
1. Rapid Population Growth



Source: UN DESA, Population Division. *World Population Prospects, the 2015 revision*

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2. Rapid and Poorly Planned Urbanization



Urban and slum population in Africa (Millions)

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3. Depletion of Natural Resources

- Deforestation
 - Has already wiped out roughly 90% of West Africa's original forests
- Land degradation
 - Has been very high due to expansion of agriculture and changing land use
- Loss of biodiversity
 - Without implementation of proper conservation strategies, biodiversity in Africa will continue to be at risk



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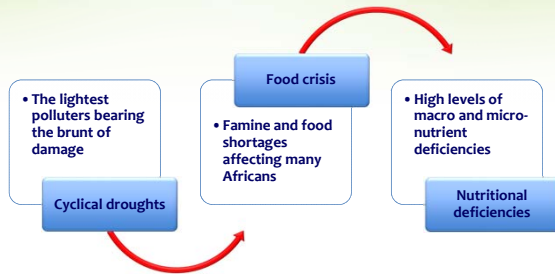
4. Environmental Pollution

- Air pollution
 - Combustion of fossil fuels,
 - Household indoor air pollution,
 - Landscape fires
 - [Toxic fuels](#) sold to Africa
- Water and food pollution
 - Poor management of wastes including industrial and medical wastes



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5. Climate change & its effects



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HOW CAN AFRICA ADDRESS THESE PLANETARY HEALTH CHALLENGES?

If Africa commits to address the key challenges...



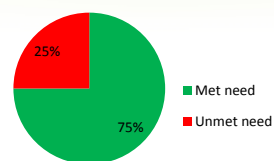
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1. Improving access to Family planning

FAMILY PLANNING



Family planning



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2. Implement Planned Urban Development

- **Localizing SDGs:** Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe resilient and sustainable.
- **Implementing the New Urban Agenda:** Guidance in planning for sustainable development in cities.
- **Taking local actions:** Development and implementation of national and regional development policies and plans for urban areas.



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3. Integrated Environmental Management strategies



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4. Research & Advocacy: Being evidence-based

- Individual, community, and national level actions must be informed/supported by evidence.
- That evidence must be locally relevant and locally generated.
- To generate such evidence, Africa needs Africa-based and Africa-led centers of excellence for research and research capacity strengthening programs.



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HOW CAN ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH COMMUNITIES CONTRIBUTE TO THE SOLUTIONS?

Going beyond the studying the problem...



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I. Problem-solving & implementation research

While studying the challenges/problems is important, research on Planetary Health issues in Africa has to advance beyond this to focus on problem-solving and implementation research.



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II. Strengthen Local Capacity

- Short-term, medium-term and long-term training programs on planetary health issues
 - Developing new training programs in planetary health
 - Aligning existing training programs
- Building local research and research use capacity
 - Implementing hand-on research projects
 - Exchange programs



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III. Foster Partnership and Collaboration

- To set integrated research agenda in planetary health at national and regional levels
- For coordinated evidence-based advocacy for new policies and interventions
- North-south, South-South and East-west collaborations for funding and implementing further research on PH



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Conclusions

- There are unique PH challenges in Africa
- Solutions to a number of these are readily available
- Implementing what works at individual, household, community and national levels is essential and requires contextualized evidence.
- Developing local capacity for such evidence generation and use is a critical imperative for Africa



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