To prevent disease,
TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE

Need to know: Climate change will alter disease patterns

Just like the weather affects people, it affects insects, bacteria and organisms that cause disease. Changes in the climate – especially related to rainfall and temperature – will alter current disease patterns. That means diseases may spread to new areas, or they may occur for longer periods of time and at different times of the year. Here are a few examples of how climate changes might increase the risk of common diseases in South-East Asia.

MALARIA - DENGUE - JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS - LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS

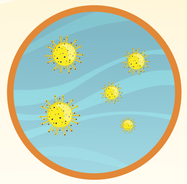


Mosquitoes host parasites, viruses and roundworms and transmit them when they bite

Climate link:

Higher temperatures and higher humidity allow mosquitoes to breed more, bite more and move to new areas.

DIARRHOEAL DISEASES



Rotaviruses cause diarrhoeal disease

Climate links:

- Droughts and floods (with stagnant water) allow viruses to reproduce more.
- Flooding contaminates drinking water leading to more people ingesting harmful bacteria.



Vibrio bacteria cause cholera

Climate links:

- Coastal storm surges bring warm sea water inland, allowing bacteria to reproduce more.
- Flooding contaminates drinking water, leading to more people ingesting harmful bacteria.

INTESTINAL DISEASES



Soil transmitted worms cause intestinal disease

Climate link:

Higher temperatures and periods of dryness allow worms to reproduce more.

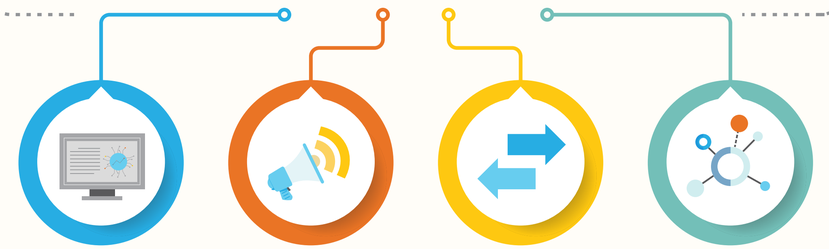
World Health Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR South-East Asia

HOW CAN CLIMATE-INFORMED DISEASE SURVEILLANCE HELP?

Across South-East Asia, the elimination of many tropical diseases is within reach, But climate change might derail that progress. To respond, we need to know where and when diseases may occur. That's where surveillance systems come in.

Information informs action

Climate-informed disease surveillance systems use computer software to analyse climate and weather information together with disease data to understand when and where outbreaks might occur. They can help health authorities manage climate-sensitive diseases and improve the delivery of health programmes. The analysis will support decision-makers in taking action; for example: creating early warning systems to alert people to potential risks and informing planners at hospitals and clinics, so they are ready both for emergencies and slower, evolving shifts in diseases.



Maps and other information pinpointing areas of greatest risk

Early warning to communities of possible outbreaks

Collaboration of experts in health, climate, data analysis, communication and other specialities

Coordination of national, regional and local health officials and leaders

CLIMATE ACTION IS HEALTH ACTION

Disease prevention and climate action go hand in hand. Become a health-climate advocate by collaborating, communicating and mobilising others.

Start at home

- Reduce standing water and clear gutters
- Clean water storage tanks regularly and keep them covered
- Ensure latrines are separate from drinking water
- Make a plan for flooding, droughts and other extreme weather events

Be a champion in your community

- Engage local health officials in developing local action plans covering climate and disease
- Inform health authorities about cases of malaria, dengue or other tropical diseases
- Educate people about local risks of climate and disease

Ask government to prioritise health-climate action

- Build strong systems for monitoring and providing early warning of disease outbreaks
- Train healthcare workers to recognise new and changing disease patterns
- Strengthen hospital and healthcare centre disease response systems
- Make water and sanitation infrastructure climate-resilient

LEARN MORE: www.who.int/southeastasia