

RESOURCING CLIMATE AND HEALTH PRIORITIES

MAPPING OF INTERNATIONAL
FINANCE FLOWS, 2018-2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

January 2025



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The impacts of the climate crisis are being felt around the world as people lose their families, communities, lands, and livelihoods. Every fraction of warming compounds this suffering, and the cost of inaction will ultimately be measured in human lives. It is estimated that climate change could result in 14.5–15.6 million deaths between 2026 and 2050.

Countries are planning for the threat climate change poses to health, and finance – both domestic and international – must keep up to meet those needs. Delivering a sustainable, resilient world is an immensely complex and expensive task. Fractured and inefficient funding is preventing communities around the world from responding effectively to the growing health risks posed by climate change. Previous estimates have found that just 6% of adaptation funding and 0.5% of multilateral climate funding are allocated to health sector projects. Countries remain woefully under-resourced to protect human health and wellbeing, to build more resilient health systems, and to respond to the climate crisis.

Averting climate disaster and fortifying health systems demands a rapid scale up of financing through coordinated mobilization of public and private funds at a scale never before seen. Diverse solutions, both within and outside the health sector, are required to protect health from climate impacts, necessitating coordinated and cross-sectoral finance. The scale of this crisis requires financing institutions to work differently to avoid the ‘zero sum game’ approach that often plagues the global health and development sectors, and in turn creates even more entrenched siloes. Increased resource mobilization to secure additional financing will be critical to deliver on making the world a safer place for both people and planet.

This report provides the most comprehensive analysis to date of the levels and trends in self-reported financing for climate and health, and provides a critical baseline understanding from which countries, funders, implementers, and advocates can work to strengthen financing for climate and health.

To enable the quantification and tracking of funding, this report conceptualizes climate and health finance primarily as international concessional financing commitments, in and outside of the health sector, that:

1. Address the direct health impacts of climate change,
2. Support the health sector to adapt to and mitigate climate change, and
3. Generate health co-benefits from climate action.

This definition builds on the existing understanding of the climate and health nexus as outlined in the World Health Organization’s *2023 Operational Framework for Building Climate Resilient and Low Carbon Health Systems* and in the *COP28 Guiding Principles for Financing Climate and Health Solutions*.

KEY FINDINGS

- › **Financing for climate and health increased ten-fold from 2018 to 2022:** Funders self-reported US\$7.1 billion in climate and health finance commitments, a significant increase from the less than US\$1 billion provided in 2018, demonstrating the increasing prioritization of climate and health among leading finance partners. In 2022, this included approximately:
 - US\$4.8 billion in commitments from bilateral donors
 - US\$0.6 billion in commitments from four multilateral development banks
 - US\$1.5 billion in commitments from two health multilateral funds
 - US\$130 million in commitments from philanthropies
 - US\$23 million in commitments from multiple climate multilateral funds
- › **Bilateral donors increasingly report making health sector investments that are climate relevant:** The share of climate finance targeting the health sector increased from 1% in 2018 to 9% in 2022, the only sector, apart from education, to see an increase.
- › **A large share of finance is provided as loans with implications for the fiscal health of recipient countries:** A large share of available funding is provided as loans, including 24% of bilateral donors' climate and health funding, and more than 90% of Asian Development Bank and Inter-American Development Bank's total funding for climate and health.
- › **Large potential to improve health through climate action in other sectors:** In addition to the US\$7.1 billion of direct support to the health sector for climate action, funders committed an average of US\$13.5 billion annually between 2018 and 2022 for activities in health-determining sectors with the potential to result in significant health improvements, such as through reduced air pollution.
- › **Financing is not sufficiently reaching the most impacted countries:** Less than 35% of finance from bilateral donors is channeled directly to countries, and less than 50% of overall funding analyzed flowed to low-income countries.

The analysis includes several limitations. Funder data on climate and health commitments are self-reported using different definitions of climate and health. This makes it difficult to determine the extent to which commitments constitute new financing or rather a reclassification of existing commitments and projects as climate relevant. The lack of standardized data on finance flows across disparate funders and sectors also limits comparison across finance categories. Recognizing these limitations, this report presents the data to provide an initial overview of the funding landscape for climate and health. Further details on the methodology, data sources and limitations can be found in the methodology section of the main report, and in the Methodology Note.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In an era of rising geopolitical tensions, increased conflict, a looming global debt burden, and worsening climate shocks, countries have limited fiscal options to fund climate and health priorities. Impacted countries and communities urgently require *scaled up, accessible, and equitable finance* to prevent and address the harmful impacts of climate change on human health, including through taking ambitious climate action to avert worsening climate change and fossil fuel-related air pollution. While this report demonstrates that substantial progress has been made, it is clear that there is much more to be done to effectively address climate change's impact on health.

Considering an increasingly limited supply of finance, health financing must better integrate a climate focus, while climate finance must better prioritize improvements in human health. This report emphasizes the need to better integrate the climate and health nexus into the allocation of both climate and health financing, at the same time as climate finance and health finance are scaled up to meet climate change and global health goals.

In addition to the need for greater finance, countries face major challenges accessing resources due to fragmented, complex, and laborious processes, and limited domestic capacity to access and absorb large scale investments. Funders are in the process of defining investment priorities and frameworks leading to unclear signals on funding eligibility and weak accountability on what qualifies as true climate and health funding.

Integrated planning of climate and health investments is a key success factor for countries to access funding. While more than 90% of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) include health considerations, most countries lack a clear picture of the financing needed to address climate and health goals. There is a clear need to translate growing political commitment into actionable, financeable plans that enable the implementation of climate and health solutions across society. Updated NDCs in 2025, alongside the development of strong NAPs and Health National Adaptation Plans (HNAPs), represent opportunities for countries to share their climate and health commitments with the global community, and for the global community to rally around providing the finance needed to meet these commitments.

Funders, civil society, academia, and policymakers all have a role to play in supporting impacted countries and communities to access the financing they need to address the climate and health crisis. To protect health and save lives, the global community must:

- › **Increase funding available for climate and health:** Scaling funding for climate and health solutions is both necessary and feasible. There are opportunities for new and existing funders to increase investment in climate and health solutions aligned with their mandates and priorities. Enhancing the existing evidence base on climate and health impacts, including on the return on investment for climate and health interventions across sectors, can drive increased and more strategic investment. It is critical that expanding finance for climate and health action does not divert essential finance for climate mitigation and adaptation in health determining sectors – hence additional funding is needed, and soon. There are opportunities for resource mobilization through fiscal policy reforms, and efforts to scale financing for climate and health should take place in alignment with broader efforts to reform the global financial architecture to advance climate, health, and development goals.
- › **Align investment priorities and frameworks to maximize impact:** Developing a clear, shared understanding of evidence-based high-impact climate and health interventions in all sectors, and better understanding of population vulnerability to climate shocks, will guide funders in prioritizing and coordinating resource provision in line with community contexts. Coordinated action across the climate, health, and development finance communities will accelerate efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and ensure more effective and efficient use of limited resources.
- › **Accelerate delivery and improve access to funding:** Within existing funding mechanisms, funders can simplify processes to access finance for climate and health, while countries build their funding pipelines. Clear and publicly available investment priorities, investment volumes, key performance indicators, and application processes can additionally enable access.

- › **Channel funding to country priorities:** As country priorities are further defined and updated (e.g. through NDCs), funders must collaborate and integrate investments to increase impact and reduce country burden. In line with country efforts to reduce debt burden, the quality of future finance must be considered, with an emphasis on scaling up grant-based finance that does not exacerbate the debt crisis and undermine the ability of the most impacted countries to invest in health, climate, and economic wellbeing.
- › **Standardize definitions and increase transparency:** Funders and normative bodies must align on a standardized taxonomy and use a consistent methodology to report their climate, health, and cross-sectoral finance. Transparent reporting will provide greater visibility into investments and enable funders, countries, and advocates to track finance against need and close critical gaps.

The climate crisis is an immediate and existential threat. Well-financed climate action is also an opportunity for radical transformation of our communities and economies to achieve health and wellbeing for all. Between the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26), COP27, COP28, and COP29, countries and funders have dramatically increased political and financial commitments for the climate and health nexus. Health is also set to feature more prominently in the next round of NDCs and the Global Goal on Adaptation. In parallel, several funder groups are collaborating to align on mandates, investment frameworks, and co-financing opportunities. These developments signal continued momentum for the climate and health nexus, with opportunities to translate commitments into more accessible funding for the countries and communities who need it.

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The findings and conclusions contained within are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect positions or policies of Foundation S - The Sanofi Collective, Reaching the Last Mile, RF Catalytic Capital Inc., or The Rockefeller Foundation.

For the full version of the report, please visit: www.rockefellerfoundation.org/CxHFinanceReport