

**NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN HEALTH
22 TO 23 NOVEMBER 2007,
KARAWACI TANGERANG, INDONESIA**

SUMMARY

The National Workshop on Climate Change and Human Health in Indonesia was conducted by the Environmental Health Unit, Ministry of Health Indonesia together with the World Health Organization in Indonesia.

The objectives of the workshop were:

1. To review and share the experiences of the impacts of climate variability and long-term climate change in Indonesia;
2. To learn available methodologies and tools for vulnerability assessment and possible options for adaptation and mitigation that minimize health impacts;
3. To develop recommendations in national level in promoting mitigation and adaptation address health and environmental issues resulting climate change.

The workshop was attended by 48 participants from national health officers, Ministry of Environment, researchers from Meteorological agencies, Public Health Experts Association, Planning Board, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Technology Development, academia and Ministry of Health.

The Directorate General of Disease Control, Ministry of Health Indonesia, stressed the magnitude of direct and indirect impacts from climate change and the Ministry of Environment explained that Indonesia has had series of meetings in order to formulate a National Action Plan addressing mitigation and adaptation.

Other presentations focused on the global impact of climate change and methodologies and tools to assess vulnerability and adaptation; national descriptions on climate change impacts in various settings; impacts of climate change on flora and fauna. Discussions paid a lot of attention to the challenges posed by the need for more political and financial support from decision makers.

Main conclusions were:

1. Climate change impacts that have occurred are the rising of extreme events such as droughts, floods, storms, and also cases of vector borne diseases (eg. malaria, dengue, filariasis), waterborne diseases (eg. diarrhea, cholera), cases of malnutrition and respiratory diseases.
2. Small islands populations are the most vulnerable. Rising temperatures and sea level will have tragic impacts due to increased risks of storms and reduced productivity of fishery.
3. In Indonesia development still focuses basically on increasing the economic growth and reducing poverty, without efforts to reduce GHG emissions. Without mitigation (reduction of forest fires, rationalizing plantation of biofuels, etc.) there will be an increase of climate-sensitive diseases and these will become an additional burden for low income communities.
4. Adaptation options that minimize health impacts need to be considered in a national prevention plan.
5. Alternatives to minimize health impacts should include a proactive attitude in anticipating risks, in recognizing the current situation and in ensuring active participation of central government and district levels but also at international level.

6. A main adaptation strategy consists in strengthening the existing health programs such as communicable disease surveillance and control programmes and health education. To this purpose, providing valid evidence based data from research is a key issue.
7. Relevant evidence based data is needed for the political decision makers to issue the appropriate policies.
8. Adaptation in the national agenda needs to focus on technology development, improvement of resource capacity, sustainability of financial support and development of tools towards the improvement of environment quality.
9. Adaptations for Climate Change impacts on health need to be reflected in the Five Years Planning Program and in the long term, climate change issues need to be the main focus of national development planning.
10. BAPPENAS (*National Development Planning Bureau*) should advocate the technical departments to put climate change issues on their annual program. BAPPENAS would also advocate the decision makers to ensure political support.
11. Adaptation programs in Indonesia should include: mapping climate change patterns and projections, understanding of potential diseases that would occur, improving infrastructure plan and rising social awareness about climate change.
12. To reduce the health burden due to Climate Change there is need to change the current reactive attitude of the health sector to a proactive one. This implies learning to anticipate risks and actively participate at all levels with other sectors, especially climatology and planning agencies. This would allow designing health programmes that respond more effectively to the local needs.

Recommendation:

Every government and non-governmental organization in Indonesia has made efforts in addressing the threats posed by Climate Change and Global Warming. However, there is a significant lack of communication between all sectors.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to:

1. Set up a “**Communication Forum on Climate Change and Health**” for partnerships between government and stakeholders at national, provincial, district and local levels, to build communication among all sectors in view of anticipating action to protect human health from the adverse impacts of climate change and global warming.
2. The Forum would focus on climate change and health, collecting and disseminating related data and informing all sectors and communities on progress made. The Forum would also develop research methodologies for studies on climate change and human health, conduct events and deliver inputs to decision-makers.

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