

Planetary Health Alliance in Action: Lessons from the West Africa Region

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P L A N E T A R Y
H E A L T H
W E S T A F R I C A
R E G I O N A L H U B

West Africa Regional Hub Team:

Commissioned in the year 2019

1

West Africa Regional Hub Representative

- Dr. Mary Ashinyo is a Physician Specialist in Public Health with emphasis on Health Policy and Systems Management.
- Currently, she is WHO Global Analyst

2

Countries Involved in the Region 16 West African Countries



3

Mission and Vision

- To advance innovative solutions and promote holistic approaches that safeguard human well-being while preserving the ecological integrity of the region
- A resilient West Africa where human health and environmental sustainability coexist harmoniously



West Africa Regional Hub: A Hub of Innovation and Action

Key Objectives

The West Africa Regional Hub focuses on addressing pressing planetary health challenges specific to the region, including climate change, deforestation, air and water pollution, and food insecurity

Partnerships

The hub works closely with local communities, governments, and organizations in West Africa, fostering partnerships and building capacity to address planetary health concerns

Collaborative Research

The hub promotes collaborative research projects that integrate environmental and health perspectives, generating valuable insights and solutions for the region

Initiatives From West Africa Regional Hub: Addressing Climate Change

1

Climate Change Impacts

Climate change is exacerbating existing health challenges in West Africa, leading to increased heatwaves, droughts, floods, and vector-borne diseases

2

Adaptation and Mitigation

We supports initiatives that help communities adapt to climate change impacts, such as improving water management and sanitation, and promoting sustainable agriculture practices

3

Community Engagement

Engaging local communities in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts is crucial, empowering them to play an active role in protecting their health and environment



Initiatives From West Africa Regional Hub: Addressing Air Pollution and its Health Consequences



1

Air Pollution Sources

Air pollution in West Africa is primarily caused by industrial emissions, vehicle exhaust, and biomass burning for cooking and heating

2

Health Impacts

Air pollution poses serious health risks, leading to respiratory diseases, cardiovascular problems, and premature mortality

3

Mitigation Strategies

We support initiatives that reduce air pollution through cleaner energy sources, improved transportation systems, and cleaner industrial practices

Initiatives from West Africa Regional Hub: Building Capacity and Empowering Communities



Community Engagement

The PHA recognizes the importance of community engagement in planetary health initiatives, empowering local communities to participate in decision-making and action



Capacity Building

The hub supports training and education programs to build the capacity of local communities and professionals in planetary health principles and practices



Knowledge Sharing

The PHA promotes knowledge sharing and dissemination of research findings and best practices to support the implementation of effective planetary health initiatives



Leadership Development

The hub supports leadership development programs to cultivate a new generation of leaders committed to advancing planetary health in West Africa

Initiatives from West Africa Regional Hub: Youth Engagement & Empowering the Next Generation

1

Planetary Health Campus Ambassadors

The PHA has established a network of campus ambassadors across Africa, including Kenya, to engage youth in planetary health initiatives. These ambassadors act as champions for change within their universities and communities, raising awareness, fostering dialogue, and driving action

2

Empowering Youth Leaders

The regional hub provides training and mentorship opportunities for young people to develop their leadership skills, build their knowledge of planetary health, and become effective advocates for a sustainable future

3

Creating Opportunities

The hub fosters collaborations between young people and established experts to create opportunities for intergenerational learning, knowledge sharing, and the co-creation of solutions

4

Building a Network

By connecting young leaders across the region, the hub creates a powerful network of changemakers who can share ideas, collaborate on projects, and amplify their voices for planetary health

Initiatives from West Africa Regional Hub: Policy Advocacy and Shaping a Sustainable Future

Policy Area	Action
Climate Change Mitigation	Promote policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition to renewable energy sources
Biodiversity Conservation	Support policies that protect ecosystems, conserve species, and promote sustainable land management practices
Health Equity	Advocate for policies that address the health impacts of environmental degradation and ensure access to healthcare for all

Initiatives From West Africa Regional Hub: Promoting Planetary Health Education



1

Promote Planetary Health Education

We support educational programmes through conferences, seminars, webinars relating to planetary health so as to enlighten individuals and groups

2

Creating awareness

Creating awareness in schools, universities, and communities

3

Changemakers

Build a new generation of changemakers committed to a sustainable future

Lessons Learnt and Future Plans



Expanding Regional Partnerships

- Collaborations with other African Planetary Health Hubs
- Increased engagement with global health organizations

Need for Cross-sector Collaboration

- Partnerships between health, environment, and agriculture sectors
- Engaging private sector in sustainable development initiatives

Strengthening Policy Influence

- Advocating for planetary health in national policies
- Supporting evidence-based decision-making

Conclusion



1

Our Hub is a model for integrated planetary health action

2

Call to action for increased support and collaboration

3

Contact information for further engagement

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
ATTENTION**