

Foreword

It is becoming increasingly clear that the climate crisis is also a health crisis, and that while every sector has a role to play in protecting our planet's natural systems, the imperative for the health sector is especially strong.

Good Health for All is simply not possible in a +1.5 degree Celsius world. This means health leaders at all levels and in all countries have an urgent and pivotal role to play. They should address the health sector's own environmental impact and use all the influence they can muster to support others as they transform too. The Road Map sets out clear trajectories and practical actions that each health leader should consider.

This report is about actions that help transform societies toward a resilient, sustainable, and healthy future. It is specific about how health leaders can best contribute. It recognizes that, in the pursuit of universal health coverage, health systems face very different challenges and that the equitable pursuit of decarbonization pathways is essential. This includes equipping all health systems for the future stresses and shocks that climate change will bring.

Health leaders have many opportunities to contribute to climate action in ways that reflect the urgency of the climate crisis.

The modelling in the Road Map implies that innovative solutions are needed. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that technical and operational challenges within the health sector can be solved at a breathtaking pace when they are sufficiently focused, adequately resourced, and receive consistent political support.

A similar well-directed effort is required to address the health impacts of climate change. This should be aimed at both ensuring resilient systems and protecting those likely to be most affected.

Health leaders have many opportunities to contribute to climate action and to do so unequivocally in ways that reflect the urgency of the climate crisis. I hope it will catalyze wider public engagement in regenerating and protecting the precious resources of our planet for the sake of everyone's health and well-being. This calls for urgent action now, implemented in ways that focus on the needs of those who are hardest to reach and are at risk of being left behind – both now and for years to come. The task is huge and there is no time to lose.



David Nabarro

Chair of Global Health
and Co-Director at IGHl Imperial College London
WHO COVID-19 Special Envoy