



Environmental change and water-related, vector borne diseases in eastern Africa: the HEALTHY FUTURES project

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Pathogens that spend time outside the human body, and any organisms involved in their transmission, have particular ecological requirements; as environment, including climate, conditions change, then the transmission characteristics of associated pathogens – and the diseases caused - are also likely to vary. Relationships between environment and health in many parts of the world remain poorly studied and are often overlooked, however. This is particularly the case in developing countries, because of budgetary and available expertise constraints. Moreover the relationship is often confounded by other factors. These other factors contribute to human vulnerability, and thus to the overall disease risk due to environmental change.

This presentation will highlight the importance of environmental, including climate, change information to a better understanding of the risks to health of projected future environmental changes, and to the more efficient and effective use of scarce health resources in the developing world. The paper will focus on eastern Africa, and in particular the health effects of future projected environmental change impacts on water-related, vector borne diseases in the East African Community region. Moreover the paper will highlight how the EU FP7-funded project HEALTHY FUTURES is, through a broadly-based, integrative approach that distinguishes environmental change-induced health hazard from health risk aims to support the health decisions making process, thereby attempting to help mitigate negative health impacts.