

# Be-cause health

## Working Group on Planetary Health for Climate Justice and Health Equity

ToR

25/04/2022

Julia Steinberger *“Don’t sit back and read and think and wait for to have achieved the perfect theory to develop the perfect strategy for action: Get out there. Interfere. Talk to people. Try like all heck to change bits and bobs of the systems that surround you. As you’ll try, you’ll learn, and as you’ll learn, your chances of success will expand extraordinarily”.*

(Retrieved by: <https://jksteinberger.medium.com/individuals-and-social-pressure-how-to-change-the-world-8304ada3bbca> )

### Purpose

This Working Group (WG) of the Be-cause health (BCH) platform emerges from the lessons learnt of the “Climate Justice and Health Equity Conference” held in 2021, one of the first events in Belgium to call a diversity of actors for sharing experiences and building knowledge on the topic.

Due to the complexity and relevance of the climate crisis and environmental degradation impact on health at global and local levels, transdisciplinary networks are a fruitful mechanism for understanding and tackling the multiple effects of such web of phenomena.

The environmental-health nexus emerged quite recently in the global health field, in the policy landscape, in the media, and among civil society organisations and movements. Therefore, we acknowledge an urgent need for developing a common language, shared vision, and experimenting and scaling concrete solutions among academia, health actors, policy decision-makers, humanitarian and development NGOs, as well as individual engaged citizens without discrimination.

The ultimate goal of the WG is contributing to climate justice and health equity. In line with the Be-cause health principles of social protection and equitable access to good quality responsive health services for all, and strong, resilient and sustainable health systems, this WG aims to create a space for technical exchange and to facilitate joint initiatives.

In terms of ambitions, this WG wishes to be positioned as the central Belgian climate and health network, promoting meaningful participation of diverse range of actors from Low and Middle Income Countries and underrepresented and marginalised voices.

## Topics / sub-topics

Due to the complexity of the links between climate crisis and health and the transdisciplinary nature of an emerging field of knowledge that makes boundaries between concepts quite blurred, it is not possible to define an exhaustive list of topics to be covered. Instead, we propose a cloud tag of main topics on the table of this WG. More details on topics and their interrelations and relevance for this WG will appear in the papers or guidelines that the WG will produce.



## Principles

In addition to upholding human rights and professionalism, the WG highlights the following values that actively drive the work of the WG. This does not in any way seek to substitute the ethical chart or commitment of BCH. It rather recognises that respecting and implementing these requires concrete actions. The WG aims to promote Inclusion, Transparency, Decoloniality, Justice, Equity, and Gender.

Objectives and actions

Work domains	Objectives	<b>Actions</b> <i>(Just few examples of actions to be translated in a feasible action plan each year, therefore not exhaustive nor exclusive list)</i>
<b>Sharing</b> (focal point 2022/2023: Muhammad Asaduzzaman)	Build a network of collaborators (individuals, groups, institutions, etc.)	Mapping actors and initiatives and create a registry of collaborators
	Contribute to knowledge building and evidence generation	Establishing research collaborations
	Bridge the knowledge-to-do gap between academia and actors on the following fields: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Translating research findings into policy actions</li> <li>— Identifying scalable practices and interventions</li> <li>— Post-pandemic policies</li> </ul>	Publishing policy/case documentation and other technical products
	Create an online space for shared resources (articles, reports, links, etc.)	Open a repository/unified database on planetary health topics
<b>Learning</b> (focal point 2022/2023: TBD)	Framing the environmental-health nexus beyond the biomedical approach and defining One Health and Planetary Health approaches as unifying narratives, from a system thinking perspective	Define in a technical document the vision and definition of Planetary Health to have common language and understanding
	Provide learning opportunities on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Sustainable or restorative economic models (i.e. the donut model)</li> <li>— Localised, bottom-up, and small-scale solutions (both successful and failed initiatives)</li> <li>— Learning from field voices from unheard populations</li> <li>— Learning from social movements, especially youth movements</li> <li>— Learning about how to speak about the Climate Crisis</li> <li>— Links between climate justice and health equity</li> </ul>	Providing capacity building opportunities and trainings for younger researchers  Organising thematic webinars / seminars

<b>Influence</b> (focal point 2022/2023: Davide Olchini)	Positioning as an active actor in the planetary health space	Map out opportunities and participating in events/relevant activities
	Follow and inform the global research agenda	Creating communication channels
	Reinforcing skills and actions tackling climate crisis among Belgian NGOs and other actors for a comprehensive and coordinated response	Drafting guidelines and position papers
	Follow and advocate at COP27	Conducting awareness activities
	Communicating and advocacy by linking climate change / environment to health, we provide a 'human face' to the complexity of climate change, making it more understandable to people / communities, closer to their daily world, with a view to engage more people into action. I think this maybe	Utilising social media, write blogs
<b>Coordination</b> (focal points 2022/2023: Davide Ziveri and Xavier de Béthune with the support of Magalie Schotte)	Become the platform of reference in Belgium on the environmental-health nexus	Common application gateway for conferences
	Ensure regular activities of the WG	Ensure organization and facilitation of the WG meetings

## Membership and roles

Membership in the WG follows the same rules as that of the BCH framework.

Participating in the WG does not imply a formal membership of the Belgian network of BCH, however membership is encouraged and engagement in the activities is a condition (not observer status). Members of the WG endorse the mission and vision of BCH: <https://www.be-causehealth.be/en/about-us/vision-mission/>.

In addition, the WG, in a following phase after its constitution, will design a communication strategy for aggregating other actors and inviting new members. Because external communication is implied, the strategy will be submitted to the BCH steering committee and general assembly.

Participants should decide every 2 years the roles defined in the BCH framework, namely: coordinator, vice-coordinator, and secretary.

In order to ensure inclusive participation, this WG will make the best effort to provide reasonable accommodation case by case.

In the sake of feasibility, this WG facilitates links with other networks via its members (and not via the formal participation of BCH in those external networks). The WG members are available for bridging

information, when relevant and without disclosing sensitive issues, from one network to another in an informal and effective way.

## Functioning

Functioning is intended to be as flexible as possible.

For ensuring minimum coordination, each 3 months meeting will be organised on a regular basis. More meetings for ad hoc tasks could be organised on demand and according to the annual action plan.

This group is open-ended and its continuity will be decided every year.

The working language is English, with translation to French and Dutch provided for special events or documents.

The WG could open sub-working groups or voluntary task forces for special events or drafting documents, etc. at any moment to be more effective toward a specific task avoiding siloing knowledge or practices by topic or theme. Sub-working groups inform the whole group of their activity during the coordination meeting.

Participants will engage also in sharing relevant information for mutual learning, according to the communication channel the WG prefers (i.e. internal mailing list or other communication tools).