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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Director-General of the West African Institute of Public Health (WAIPH) Urges Participants of Africa Climate Summit and Africa Climate Week 2023 to Address Climate Change Impact on Human Health and Economic Development in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Abuja, 4<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 – The Director-General of the West African Institute of Public Health (WAIPH), Dr Francis Ohanyido, has issued a passionate call to action to all participants of the Africa Climate Summit (ACS) and Africa Climate Week 2023 (ACW) in Nairobi. The director-general has implored attendees to collectively work towards formulating and implementing strategies and policies that mitigate and halt the detrimental effects of climate change on human health, economic development, and growth in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

Africa is uniquely vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, with tens of millions of Africans already experiencing negative health impacts. These include heat stress, extreme weather events, and increased transmission of infectious diseases, as reported by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The dire situation is further exacerbated by an increase in climate-linked emergencies, with 25% more climate-related events recorded in the region between 2011 and 2021.

Recent research has also shown that climate change poses significant challenges to primary healthcare services in Africa, leading to malnutrition, infectious diseases, heat-related conditions, injuries, and more. The effects of climate change in SSA are far-reaching, encompassing not only human health but also economic development and growth.

As the Africa Climate Summit and Africa Climate Week 2023 convene policymakers, practitioners, business leaders, and civil society representatives in Nairobi, the urgency of addressing these issues cannot be overstated. The government of Kenya is hosting both events from September 4th to 8th, with the Africa Climate Summit scheduled for September 4th to 6th. This represents a critical opportunity to chart a new course for climate action in Africa.

Dr Ohanyido, emphasizes that Africa should not have to choose between climate action and development. It is imperative to pursue a greener developmental path while

recognizing the historical connection between economic growth and carbon emissions. Furthermore, Africa plays a pivotal role in global climate efforts, boasting invaluable green assets and renewable energy potential. These factors underscore the importance of Africa's voice and participation in shaping the global response to climate change. The West African Institute of Public Health stands in solidarity with all participants of the Africa Climate Summit and Africa Climate Week 2023, urging them to prioritize the health and well-being of Africa's people, as well as the sustainable development of the continent.

Director-General encourages active dialogue, collaboration, and the development of innovative solutions during these events and beyond, to ensure that Africa's future is one where climate change no longer threatens the health and prosperity of its people.

For media inquiries and further information, please contact:

Ms. Fisola Olagbemi, [folagbemi@publichealth-edu.org](mailto:folagbemi@publichealth-edu.org)

About WAIPH:

*The West African Institute of Public Health (WAIPH) is a leading regional nonstate and nonprofit institution committed to promoting public health in West Africa. WAIPH conducts research, training, and advocacy to address public health challenges and strengthens health systems as well as promotes sustainable development in the region.*

*For more information about WAIPH, please visit [www.publichealth-edu.org](http://www.publichealth-edu.org)*