

PS 3.6

MULTI-SECTORAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES: ADAPTATION

| BACKGROUND

Adaptation action advances climate-resilient communities, ecosystems, and economies, with particular focus on vulnerable populations – the poor, women, and indigenous peoples. These groups are often the most vulnerable to climate change and are at greater health risk of its impacts. A single shock (e.g. a storm) or slow onset impact (such as sea level rise) can exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and increase the likelihood of locking communities already at risk into cycles of poverty. Support to countries to respond to the ongoing impacts of climate change and to prepare for likely impacts, including uncertainty, in the future, is imperative.

Climate change puts the healthcare system at risk by threatening infrastructure through extreme weather and in meeting the growing demand for treating climate-induced illness. The integration of climate risks and health into national planning and budgeting processes and strategies through Health National Adaptation Plans (H-NAPs), Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessments (V&A's), and National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) is also a way of drawing attention to the issue. This enables countries to align their adaptation planning processes with their national development plans and other existing planning efforts while ensuring whole-of-society and multi-stakeholder engagement with key institutions, academia, civil society, NGOs, and the private sector.

| OBJECTIVES

The objective of this session is to share examples and ideas for multisectoral practices and policies to improve understanding of and action on climate change adaptation and health across regions and to discuss challenges and opportunities. We will focus on strategies and interventions to promote health and adapt healthcare systems for climate change conditions through policy reform, innovation and modeling, national adaptation plans, and early warning detection systems. Through support to countries on adaptation policy and programming, the intention is to leverage and catalyze financing – domestic public finance and private finance – to scale up adaptation action in the context of supporting health.



Moderator

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One of Asia's most respected higher education, health and philanthropic leaders, Gabriel Leung is known for his commitment to improving human capabilities, nurturing impactful innovation and building strong institutions. He is Executive Director (Charities and Community) of The Hong Kong Jockey Club overseeing its Charities Trust.

Gabriel's career has straddled academe, public service and philanthropy. From 2013 to 2022, he was the longest-serving Dean of Medicine and inaugural Helen and Francis Zimmern Professor in Population Health at the University of Hong Kong (HKU). Formerly, he was Hong Kong's first Under Secretary for Food and Health and fifth Director of the Chief Executive's Office in government.

Gabriel's research defined the epidemiology of three novel viral epidemics, namely SARS in 2003, H7N9 influenza in 2013 and most recently COVID-19. In government, he led Hong Kong's response against the 2009 influenza pandemic. He was founding co-director of HKU's World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Control and established the Laboratory of Data Discovery for Health (D24H) at the Hong Kong Science and Technology Park.