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Heatwaves in cities – a global challenge

Did you know that 30 per cent of the world's population is exposed to potentially deadly heat for 20 days every year?

A proposed solution:

Despite this risk, heatwaves are chronically understudied and inadequately understood in many parts of the world. Often called the 'silent killer', heatwaves have killed thousands of people in recent years including **at least** 70,000 people in Europe in 2003 and 3,729 in India and Pakistan in 2015. The frequency and intensity of heat extremes is projected to continue to rise globally, increasing the importance of managing heatwave risks in a changing climate. Heatwave risks are also increasingly important as number of people living in urban areas continues to rise.

A practical and informative guide to help city leaders understand, prepare and respond to heatwaves in their cities. This concise guide will be developed in partnership with city officials, disaster managers, public health experts and meteorologists.

- The guide will provide basic, cross-cutting information on:
- working with partners to understand city-specific heatwave risks;
- operational approaches to prepare for an imminent heatwave;
- and response strategies to prevent human impact during an ongoing heatwave.

The guide will be informed by practical city experiences from around the world and will connect to other existing resources for more in-depth information. Finally, the guide will be complimented by a short companion guide for the 160,000 local Red Cross and Red Crescent offices around the world – providing advice on how to liaise with city officials in advancing heatwave readiness.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is the main audience for this guide?

City leaders are the primary audience for this guide, as well as Red Cross Red Crescent local offices. This guide will also be useful to other actors looking to support cities in reducing heatwave risks.

How long will the guide be?

The guide will be approximately 25 pages. It is purposefully concise to encourage practical use. The guide will be supplemented with case studies from cities around the world.

When do you anticipate that the guide will be finished?

We anticipate that the guide will be finished and launched before the end of 2018.

How will the guide connect to existing resources?

The heat wave guide will be developed based on existing literature and expert opinion from a wide range of professional fields. The guide will also contain links to websites, books and articles that provide a reader with more in-depth information.

Where can I go to learn more about heat wave risks?

Here are some resources:
Heatwaves and health: guidance on warning-system development
Special Report: Rising Heat
Heatwaves in Africa

Can I get involved?

Yes! You can be involved in the development and/or promotion of the heatwave guide. The design process includes reviewing and recommending material to the core team as well as contributing to the writing and technical review of the guide. Other ways to get involved include promoting adoption and use of the heat wave guide. Do you have another idea for how you can be involved? Let us know!

Who should I contact if I want to know more?

Please reach out to cities@climatecentre.org



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