Terms of Reference

Deadline for submission: 11 November 2025 | **Submission email: hqheathealth@paho.org**

Global Heat Health Information Network – Accelerating Action for Extreme Heat and Health - Development of Regional Hub and Network in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

The Global Heat Health Information Network (GHHIN), co-hosted by the World Meteorological Organization and the World Health Organization, is a global, independent, voluntary network composed of scientists, policymakers, and practitioners dedicated to building the capacity to protect populations from the increasing health risks of extreme heat in a changing climate. GHHIN (herewith referred to as the "Network") was created to catalyze action, share knowledge, and build capacity to mitigate the societal consequences of rising temperatures. Learn more about GHHIN at https://heathealth.info/.

The Network promotes opportunities for decision-makers, public health officials, research and scientists to come together to innovate, share lessons, and collaborate on new strategies to protect vulnerable populations globally. By fostering connections between regional and global stakeholders, the Network ensures that heat-health challenges are addressed holistically, with regionally informed approaches that reflect local realities.

GHHIN's mission is built around three key objectives:

- **Connect**: Empower people and institutions to form multi-disciplinary partnerships to reduce extreme heat risks.
- **Accelerate**: Foster the generation of evidence, actionable knowledge, and standardized guidance.
- **Catalyse**: Promote global, national, and local policy actions to mitigate the societal impacts of extreme heat.

As the risks of extreme heat continue to increase, regional, sub-regional and national approaches are crucial to addressing unique geographic and socio-economic vulnerabilities. In line with these goals, the Network launched a first regional Hub in South East Asia in 2024, hosted at the National University of Singapore Heat Resilience and Performance Center. Learn more about the SEA Hub at https://heathealth.info/southeastasia.

With the support of Wellcome Trust, two additional regional network hubs are envisioned to be launched in 2025: one in South Asia and one in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). In LAC, rising extreme heat disproportionately harms low-income and marginalized populations, threatening health, livelihoods and equity. Low-income households, informal and outdoor workers, indigenous and afro-descendant communities, children, elderly and women are among those most at risk. Regional actors in LAC are therefore best placed to support localized and effective heat-health science and action.

Through this Call for Expression of Interest, the Network aims to identify and select a leading and motivated institution, or consortium of institutions, to host a GHHIN regional hub in LAC. The Hub is expected to contribute to the network's mission and impact, while becoming a best-in-class platform for promoting heat related policy action, fostering transformational partnerships, and driving evidence-based policies to effectively manage extreme heat risks.

This ToR specifies expectations of regional Hubs' responsibilities and activities, selection criteria, and application eligibility requirements.

What is a Regional GHHIN Hub?

The Regional hub should promote and facilitate the aims of the Network, drive evidence-based interventions and policy for heat risk reduction and facilitate multi-disciplinary partnerships which empower regional stakeholders to take effective, life-saving actions.

The hub is expected to be leader in the field and should be able to engage and convene partners from at least eight countries within the LAC region to promote transboundary representation, learning, and impact. All three sub-regions: South America, Central America and the Caribbean should be represented. Broader participation is strongly encouraged, as a wider network of countries and sectors will enhance the hub's effectiveness, reach and sustainability.

Specifically, the hub should aim to foster:

- **Shared Learning:** Facilitate excellence in knowledge generation and the exchange of knowledge, data, and good practices among regional partners.
- **Action-Oriented Initiatives:** Inform local and regional policy change and implement practical interventions to mitigate heat risks.
- **Capacity Building:** Strengthen the skills and resources of local actors (e.g. NGOs, local authorities, media, researchers) to manage the impacts of extreme heat, particularly in vulnerable populations.
- **Stakeholder Diversity:** Convene and empower stakeholders from different communities, including government, national meteorological services, ministries of health, researchers, civil society organizations, decision makers, development institutions, and private sector representatives.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Regional Hub

Through this support, it is expected that the regional hub will become recognized and respected go-to-leaders in the region for translating multi-disciplinary extreme heat science into community driven policy and action. The hub will be responsible for conducting the following activities:

1. **Stakeholder Mapping & Engagement Plan**: Conduct comprehensive stakeholder mapping to identify and engage key actors. Develop communication strategies and media partnerships that foster meaningful dialogue across relevant sectors, including health, meteorology, urban planning, and policy.
2. **Management and Regional Steering Committee:** Establish a management function for Hub activities, including leadership position who will direct and represent the Hub; as well as identify a regionally representative advisory group to help set priorities, foster partnerships, guide the regional activities, and ensure that the hub remains accountable and responsive to regional needs.
3. **Regional Network Work Plan:** Co-develop with partners a work plan that reflects regional priorities while aligning with GHHIN's mission. The work plan should include clear goals, activities, and milestones, but should remain responsive to evolving regional needs.
4. **Regional Heat Event Organization:** Organize a regional conference/forum event; and engage the community through regular knowledge-sharing events which foster peer learning, co-production of knowledge, and capacity building, such as webinars and masterclasses or online platforms.

5. **Heat Season Specific Actions:** A pre-heat season briefing with the WMO designated Regional Climate Center, translating messages into Network available information, preparedness messages and advocacy; post- season review activities.

6. **Technical Assistance and Science to Policy pilot activities:** As appropriate and as resources allow, hubs are expected to be leading experts who can assist Network partners, and who propose, lead, and engage in pilot activities and research projects to respond to heat specific science and policy needs.

7. **Lesson Learning and Good Practices**: Conduct action research to collect lessons learned from local partners using a standardized instrument. Contribute to a synthesis report of multiple regions, to document and disseminate best practices and challenges.

8. **Regional Learning Exchange and Mentoring Program**: Organize and participate in inter-regional learning exchanges, which may include virtual learning sessions, mentoring programs, or study-exchange visits between regional hubs. Cooperation and technical support visits between regional hubs and global teams, ensuring consistent knowledge exchange, capacity-building efforts, and expert guidance across regions.

9. **Knowledge Management:** Contribute to GHHIN's knowledge-sharing platforms by documenting regional experiences, lessons learned, and successful interventions through blogs, reports, case studies, or multimedia content to facilitate knowledge transfer within and across regions.

10. **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning:** Conduct monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) activities focused on the implementation of heat-health interventions, stakeholder engagement, and capacity-building efforts of the hub, measure the impact of interventions and partnerships on community resilience, policy change, and capacity building. These include, conduct stakeholder mapping and baseline assessments of network membership at the start of the partnership; submit regular updates that capture key milestones, community and policy impacts, and lessons learned; participate in post-heat season evaluations to document successes, challenges, and areas for improvement.

Governance and Oversight

The regional hub is expected to establish a Steering Committee to guide its activities and ensure alignment with regional and global heat-health priorities. The Steering Committee should be multi-sectoral, composed of up to 15 representatives from key sectors, including but not limited to: national and local governments, (specifically public health and national meteorological service institutions), academic and research institutions with expertise in heat-health, civil society, development banks, UN & International organizations, as appropriate.

Staffing: While the structure is flexible, it is recommended that applicants specify key roles and responsibilities in their EOI to demonstrate governance, capacity and clarity of coordination. This may include a Hub Lead/Director, Coordinator, technical leads, communications focal points, and administrative support.

Selection Criteria for Regional GHHIN Network Hub
Eligibility

- Be a registered legal entity able to receive international funding and comply with the financial reporting requirements of PAHO/WHO. This includes, not-for-profit and non-governmental organizations, governmental entities and institutes, universities, academic and research institutes, and private sector entities are all eligible to apply.
- All applicants and partners must comply with the WHO Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors (FENSA) https://www.who.int/about/collaboration/non-state-actors

Support provided by the Network

The Network will support the regional hub by providing financial support, strategic guidance, technical assistance and coordination, resources, and visibility.

1. **Financial Support:** Funding has been earmarked for the establishment of the regional hub, details of which will be shared at the proposal stage. Funds are not intended as startup seed funding, but rather as top-up catalytic investments to strengthen stakeholder engagement, regional coordination, learning exchanges, and policy development. Following the shortlisting of applicants through the EoI process, selected institutions will be invited to submit full proposals, including a detailed budget. Additional fundraising is encouraged, and applicants should outline mid- and long-term strategies for financial sustainability. The selected institution should be capable of securing and managing diverse funding streams into the future.

2. **Coordination Support**: The hub will gain from international technical support and collaboration with the global network and other regional hubs. This support will aid in identifying needs, tracking progress, and providing expertise on specific initiatives, such as heat warning systems.

3. **Training & Mentorship**: The Hub will participate in collaboration, mentorship, and training programs with world-class institutions, donors, and collaborators.

4. **Global Visibility**: The principal manager/director/coordinator of the Regional Hub activities will have a seat on the GHHIN Global Management Committee to represent the Hub and region. Each Hub will be provided a dedicated web-page on the global website and cooperate on communication related activities. Hub activities and successes through GHHIN's website, social media, newsletters, and global events, increasing the visibility of regional work on heat-health issues

5. **Credibility and Legitimacy:** Hub institutions and activities will receive international recognition as leading experts in the field and be visibly promoted by the Network.

6. **Sustainability Support:** The Network will assist the Hub to build relations with donors and mobilize additional resources for the activities within the region.

Funding will be allocated based on an agreed-upon work plan and specific deliverables, with an emphasis on impact, collaboration, and sustainability. The hosting institution of the Hub is encouraged to provide administrative support and in-kind contributions (e.g., office space, staffing, or technical resources) to facilitate the hub's operations.

While GHHIN provides this financial support, hubs are expected to leverage additional resources and partnerships to extend their impact and ensure long-term sustainability beyond 2028. Additionally, the institution must demonstrate a clear commitment to sustaining the hub beyond 2028, including exploring diverse funding sources, integrating the hub within its long-term institutional priorities, and maintaining partnerships that support ongoing activities.

GHHIN reserves the right to revoke the role of Regional Hub, if performance, reputational or financial risks are identified and not addressed in a suitable amount of time.

> "Region" comprises all countries in South America, Mexico, Central America and Caribbean islands. For the purposes of this EoI, at least eight countries from all three sub regions should be represented. Consortiums of institutions are permitted and even encouraged. The roles and responsibilities of the lead institution and collaborating partners should be clearly defined. In the case of a consortium, the contract will be issued to the lead agency; however, both the lead agency, co-leads and all consortium members must be eligible to receive international funding.

The lead institution will be accountable for the overall coordination and delivery of the Regional Hub's responsibilities. It is expected to manage activities, oversee implementation, and provide regular updates on progress against the agreed work plan and objectives. In addition, the lead institution is expected to play a strategic role in fostering long-term partnerships, shaping regional priorities, and enabling policy uptake and sustainability beyond the initial funding period.

We understand that partnerships may evolve. At this stage, applicants should identify intended core partners and describe their expected roles. There is flexibility to adjust or finalize partnerships at the full proposal stage. The EOI is not expected to detail full governance structures or all collaborators. However, applicants are encouraged to highlight relevant experience with leading or coordinating multi-partner initiatives and your approach to consortium-building if selected, making a clear case on which institution is bringing what expertise, knowledge or resource to the consortium.

Application Process

Interested institutions are requested to follow a two-step process:

Step 1: Submission of Expressions of Interest (EOI)

The deadline for submitting EOIs is **11 November 2025 at 23:59 hrs EDT**.

Interested institutions are invited to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) in the form of a 20-page PDF document that outlines their suitability and vision for hosting a regional hub. Submissions will be reviewed based on their alignment with the selection criteria, technical expertise, regional collaboration potential, and proposed sustainability plans.

Institutions — including the lead institution or member institutions within a consortium — interested in serving as the LAC Regional Network Hub are expected to demonstrate:

- **Technical Expertise and Integrity:** Sufficient technical expertise and human resources in multi-disciplinary heat-health related fields such as public health, heat-health science, environmental science, climate science, urban planning, and occupational health.
- **Partnership Potential:** Show evidence of established or potential partnerships with government, academic, and civil society relevant organizations across the region to drive collaborative efforts.
- **Policy Impact:** Strong reputation and track record of convening and engaging with policymakers and influencing regional or national policies on heat-health issues.
- **Sustainability Plan:** A sound sustainability plan with diverse funding sources to ensure the long-term viability of regional network activities.

The EOI should describe:

1. **Experience and Motivation:** the institution's experience in organizing activities related to heat health, particularly in alignment with the expected role and responsibilities of a GHHIN hub, and the motivation for hosting it.

2. **Institutional Context**: the institutional context which makes the applicant(s) suitable to host a hub, including existing projects, partnerships, financial resources, and institutional roles that will be leveraged, including the strength of current regional institutional partnerships and collaborations.

3. **Stakeholder Engagement Plan:** example core institutions that will be invited to be part of the Network, demonstrating a diverse and multidisciplinary approach.

4. **Management and Governance Structure:** key management and implementing staff proposed to lead the Hub (provide short 100word bios), and a tentative or desirable composition of the Hub Steering Committee, including names, roles, institutions, and sectors, which would provide effective leadership and coordination.

5. **Proposed Work Plan:** A high-level draft 24-month work plan outlining key activities, milestones, and engagement strategies in line with GHHIN's objectives.

6. **Demonstrated Success**: projects, websites and reports demonstrating prior strengths and success of the institution to conduct related and similar work.

Step 2: Full Proposal Invitation and Final Selection

Shortlisted institutions will be provided feedback and invited to submit a full proposal, which will

further elaborate on the governance structure, implementation strategy, and sustainability plan for the hub.

A selection panel composed of GHHIN representatives and invited global and regional experts will evaluate the proposals and conduct interviews with the institutional leads.

Final selection will be based on:

- Strength of the proposed governance and coordination mechanism.
- Institutional capacity and track record in heat health initiatives.
- Regional relevance and potential impact of the hub.
- Feasibility and sustainability of the proposed activities.

Step 3: Selection

The selected hosting institution will be formally notified and will enter into an agreement with the World Health Organization, on behalf of GHHIN to establish and operate the regional hub. The contract will be dispersed based on progress and agreed deliverable schedule. Initial duration of the grant is 36months. Selected hub will be expected to immediately commence operations after selection. The following suggested milestones will guide implementation:

- Inception: Month 1-2: Establish governance structure, start work plan, and convene the Steering Committee. Month 2-6: Conduct stakeholder mapping and initiate engagement efforts.
- Year 1: Host regional forum event, launch key activities, including pre-post season planning, identify pilot activities and key partners, prepare and engage in learning exchanges, policy engagement, and regional coordination efforts.
- Year 2: Expand activities, identify and leverage complementary resources, track progress on heat governance, and refine sustainability strategies.
- Year 3: Conduct final evaluation and develop recommendations for the hub's future sustainability.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Evaluation Component
Technical Expertise & Relevant Experience   Demonstrated track record in heat-health, public health, stakeholder engagement, and regional initiatives.
Approach & Methodology   Clear, innovative, and practical plan aligning with Agreement of Performance of Work (APW) objectives and regional needs.
Budget & Cost-Effectiveness   Feasibility, cost justification, and efficient allocation of resources.
Value-Added Contributions   Additional insights, improvements, or innovative approaches to enhance project impact.

Template for submitting Expression of Interest for institutions applying to become the Regional Network Hub for Heat-Health in Latin America and the Caribbean

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I)   Applicant Details

Name and Contact of Lead Applicant:

- Title/Position of the authorized representative:
- Email:
- Phone:

Consortium Partners (if applicable):

- Names and countries of all partners:
- Roles in the consortium:

II)   Experience & Motivation

Describe:

1. Your institution's experience in organizing, supporting, or leading work in heat-health and related fields (e.g., public health, climate science, urban planning, occupational health).
2. Motivation for applying to host the GHHIN Regional Hub.
3. Alignment with the expected role and responsibilities of a GHHIN Hub.
4. Past contributions to national or regional heat-health policy development and advocacy.

III)   Institutional Context & Sustainability Plan

Detail:

- Ongoing and past relevant projects or collaborations.
- Strength of regional partnerships (governmental, academic, civil society).
- Institutional resources that will be leveraged.
- A brief sustainability plan outlining how the Hub's work will be maintained beyond the APW (including current or potential sources of funding).

IV)   Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Outline:

- Stakeholders and institutions to be engaged in the network.
- Strategy for ensuring a multidisciplinary and inclusive network across the region.
- How the hub will facilitate collaboration and capacity-building across institutions and countries.

V)   Management and Governance Structure
- Proposed key staff members with their roles (brief bio)
- Draft structure of the Hub Steering Committee:

- o Suggested members (names/institutions/sectors)
- o Roles and responsibilities.
- Governance mechanisms for coordination, accountability, and decision-making.

VI)   Proposed Work Plan

Provide a high-level 36-month draft work plan that includes:

- Key activities and milestones
- Timeline
- Coordination and engagement strategies with GHHIN and partners
- Regional relevance and scalability

VII)   Demonstrated Success
- List examples of past relevant projects, platforms, or collaborations (with links if available)
- Published reports, websites, or portals
- Evidence of leadership in heat-health or related regional initiatives
- Past experience certificate along with satisfactory client report

VIII)   Budget Summary & Cost-Effectiveness
- High-level estimated budget (detailed budget requested at full proposal stage)
- Breakdown by key categories (e.g., staffing, operations, regional convenings)
- Justification for costs
- Approach to ensuring value for money

IX)   Value-Added Contributions
- Highlight any additional expertise, tools, methodologies, or partnerships your institution brings and any innovative approach to enhance the project's impact or sustainability

X)   Eligibility Confirmation

Please confirm:

☐ The lead institution is a registered legal entity eligible to receive international funding.

☐ All consortium members are eligible to receive international funding in accordance with their national regulations.

☐ The applicant and all partners comply with WHO's **Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors (FENSA)**: FENSA Link.

☐ The applicant and its partners work in at least eight countries in the LAC Region.

XI)   Optional Annexes

- Letters of support from partners
- Samples of previous work or media
- Diagrams (organizational structure, proposed governance, internal coordination)