

UNICEF seeks urgent actions to counter health impacts of increasing heatwaves

25 October 2022 | News

High heatwave duration currently impacts 538 million, or 23 per cent of, children globally: Report



559 million children are currently exposed to high heatwave frequency, according to new research from UNICEF. Further, 624 million children are exposed to one of three other high heat measures -high heatwave duration, high heatwave severity or extreme high temperatures.

Produced in collaboration with The Data Collaborative for Children and launched in partnership with UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Vanessa Nakate and Africa-based Rise Up Movement, these findings underscore the urgent need to adapt the services children rely on as unavoidable impacts of global heating unfold.

Heatwaves are especially damaging to children, as they are less able to regulate their body temperature compared to adults. The more heatwaves children are exposed to, the greater the chance of health problems including chronic respiratory conditions, asthma, and cardiovascular diseases. Babies and young children are at the greatest risk of heat-related mortality. Heatwaves can also affect children's environments, their safety, nutrition and access to water, and their education and future livelihood.

A study published by The Lancet Planetary Health journal in July 2021 states that nearly 740,000 excess deaths in India annually could be attributed to abnormal hot and cold temperatures related to climate change.