



CHOICE Project: Building a Consortium to Address Climate Change, Health, and Complex Challenges

Project Overview

1. Project Overview

CHOICE is a coordinated, multi-country initiative designed to support local implementation of health and health-related Sustainable Development Goals (HHSDGs) through the activation of country-specific, multisectoral think tanks. The project is jointly implemented by the Institute for Global Health & Development (IGHD) at the Aga Khan University and the Centre for Global Child Health at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), Toronto, with technical support from both institutions. CHOICE operates in five partner countries—Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Ghana, Tanzania, and Kenya—each with a country-led think tank team that conducts landscape analyses, facilitates knowledge exchange, and supports evidence-informed advocacy for HHSDG implementation in their respective national contexts.

2. Project Goals

The overarching goal of CHOICE is to establish and activate country-level think tanks that advance progress toward the HHSDGs through evidence synthesis, advocacy, and inclusive governance. Specific goals include:

- Conduct comprehensive national landscape analyses to assess baseline HHSDG progress, with particular focus on climate change vulnerabilities, mental health, and gender inequalities
- Establish multisectoral, academic-led think tanks with representation from government, civil society, and advocacy organizations
- Develop and implement strategic advocacy activities addressing contextual barriers to HHSDG implementation
- Generate and disseminate evidence on climate change, mental health, and gender dimensions of health through policy briefs and peer-reviewed publications
- Support the development of sustainable think tank models for long-term impact and continued engagement

3. Project Approach

CHOICE is a coordinated, multi-country implementation initiative that leverages country-led think tanks to advance HHSDG progress. Each of the five participating countries—Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Ghana, Tanzania, and Kenya—undertakes the following activities:

- Conducts landscape analyses of peer-reviewed and grey literature on HHSDG progress
- Analyzes national and subnational trends in key HHSDG indicators, with attention to inequities
- Reviews existing HHSDG-related policies and programs
- Engages multiple stakeholders through in-person and virtual meetings
- Develops and implements evidence-based advocacy strategies to advance policy and programmatic change



4. CHOICE Country Partners

CHOICE operates in five partner countries across South-Central Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa:

- Pakistan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Ghana
- Tanzania
- Kenya

Each country has a country-led think tank team supported by in-country expertise and technical assistance from IGHD and SickKids. Country-specific contexts, health priorities, and governance structures are incorporated into each CHOICE country team's work plan.

5. CHOICE Think Tank Membership and Governance

Each country think tank comprises experts and stakeholders with demonstrated expertise in:

- Climate change and environmental health
- Health and mental health systems
- Gender and health equity
- Government policy and program implementation
- Civil society and community advocacy

Think tank governance within CHOICE includes clearly defined terms of reference, regular in-person and virtual meetings (minimum 4 meetings per year with broader stakeholder engagement), and transparent documentation of proceedings and decisions through meeting reports.

6. CHOICE Key Activities and Deliverables

6.1 National Landscape Analysis

A comprehensive landscape analysis of HHSDG progress in each CHOICE country that:

- Systematically scopes existing literature on HHSDG progress and implementation barriers
- Analyzes national HHSDG-related policies and programs
- Examines national and subnational trends in key health indicators
- Identifies priority areas and gaps to guide CHOICE think tank advocacy activities

Deliverables: CHOICE country landscape analysis reports circulated to think tank members and stakeholders; findings summarized for external audiences and potential publication in peer-reviewed journals

6.2 CHOICE Think Tank Research and Advocacy Activities

Evidence synthesis and advocacy activities addressing climate change vulnerabilities, mental health challenges, and gender inequalities are conducted over an 18-month period. CHOICE activities include:

- Quantitative analyses of climate change vulnerability (subnational level)
- Evidence synthesis and gap analyses
- Policy briefs for government and civil society stakeholders
- Stakeholder engagement workshops and advocacy initiatives



Deliverables: CHOICE policy briefs (minimum 2 per country), thematic summaries on climate change and mental health, and comprehensive evidence syntheses

6.3 CHOICE Monitoring and Progress Tracking

Periodic assessment of HHSDG progress across CHOICE countries that:

- Tracks changes in HHSDG-relevant indicators over the project period
- Documents CHOICE think tank activities, stakeholder engagement, and outputs
- Assesses progress toward HHSDG milestones

Deliverable: CHOICE progress reports with trend analysis and recommendations

6.4 CHOICE Knowledge Dissemination

Multi-channel dissemination of CHOICE evidence and recommendations:

- CHOICE peer-reviewed publications (climate change and mental health focus)
- Online repository/website for CHOICE think tank information and outputs
- CHOICE policy briefs for government and non-governmental stakeholders
- National and international CHOICE dissemination workshops

6.5 CHOICE Think Tank Sustainability Planning

Development of strategic plans for each CHOICE country think tank that articulates long-term aims, planned activities, governance structures, and funding strategies to support continued impact beyond the initial funding period.

7. CHOICE Expected Outputs and Outcomes

The CHOICE initiative will generate the following evidence and outputs:

- Comprehensive national landscape analyses documenting HHSDG progress and priorities across the five CHOICE countries
- Thematic publications from each CHOICE country (climate change and mental health focus)
- CHOICE policy briefs and evidence summaries for government and civil society stakeholders
- Quantitative analyses of climate change vulnerability and health system capacity
- Country-specific CHOICE think tank strategic plans for long-term sustainability
- Enhanced capacity within CHOICE countries to monitor and advocate for HHSDG progress

8. Guiding Principles

CHOICE is guided by the following principles:

- Equity and inclusion: CHOICE decisions are made transparently and include diverse stakeholder voices, with particular attention to marginalized communities
- Country-led: Each CHOICE country think tank is country-owned and country-driven, with local expertise and priorities at the center
- Evidence-informed: CHOICE activities are grounded in available evidence and gap analyses
- Sustainability-focused: From inception, CHOICE prioritizes long-term sustainability and self-sufficiency



9. CHOICE Coordinating Institutions

- Institute for Global Health & Development, The Aga Khan University, Pakistan
- Centre for Global Child Health, The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Canada

10. Funding and CHOICE Project Period

CHOICE operates with funding from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) for a three-year period (Years 1-3). Each country team receives seed funding and is encouraged to pursue additional funding and partnerships to sustain and expand CHOICE think tank activities beyond this initial funding period.