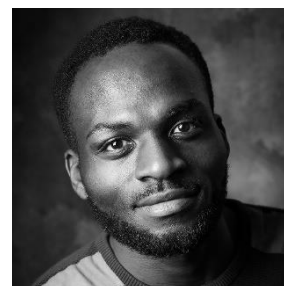


## How are health systems in sub-Saharan Africa adapting to protect human health from climate change threats?

**Hashim Hounkpatin**

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) stands out as one of the regions most affected by the climate crisis, while it has contributed to the problem only marginally. The foreseen negative effect on health adds overwhelming stress to the already overburdened health systems. Health systems' adaptation to climate change is, therefore, unavoidable to protect human health. Objective: The aim of this study was to understand how health systems in SSA are adapting to climate change threats. Methods: To achieve this, we combined a scoping review with a single case study. We 1) identified adaptation measures in SSA, 2) analysed the adaptation policymaking process using Benin as a case study and 3) suggested recommendations to improve adaptation efforts. Results: Fourteen papers were included in the review. Climate change adaptation remains a niche literature in SSA dominated by a network of authors from Europe and South Africa. Based on the scoping review, it follows that health systems in SSA are adapting through actions in seven domains: 1) health systems strengthening, 2) policy and planning, 3) financing and implementation, 4) information and capacity building, 5) citizen and migrant resilience, 6) disaster risk prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery and 7) mitigation. The Benin national adaptation plan was financially and technically dependent on international actors. The policy made adaptation options on health risks associated with the prioritized climate hazards. Conclusion: Health systems in SSA are adapting to climate change. However, systemic challenges are jeopardizing their efforts. A systemic approach with positive guiding principles is important for effective adaptation.

**Hashim Hounkpatin** is a medical doctor and public health researcher with over 7 years of dedicated research and practice at both subnational and national levels in Benin, spanning across more than 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). His diverse research portfolio encompasses critical areas such as climate change adaptation and mitigation within the SSA's growing urbanization context, the advancement of universal health coverage and social protection, maternal health, health system strengthening, process facilitation, and persuasive advocacy.



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