

**International Symposium on
Planetary aspects of urban health: Ten years of capacity building and research
at Freiburg University
25-26. Sept. 2025**

PREFACE

Environmental, climatic and social determinants of health are increasingly recognized as driving factors which shape the future of human and animal life on our planet. The growing threats are particularly evident in the ever growing urban areas where, among others, epidemic outbreaks, heat stress, burn out, violence and behavior related non-communicable diseases are demanding more and more public health actions.

Against this background, the hereby announced symposium on Planetary Health has the *overall aim* of strengthening the international research community working for a better future and of sharing with colleagues and students the current work being done in the context of Planetary Health. The occasion is threefold: To celebrate the 10th cohort of our Master in Global Urban Health at Freiburg University - the renaming of our University Centre into "Centre for Planetary Health" - the new status of our Centre as UN Habitat Collaborating Centre. All three have in common to address interrelated challenges for planetary health - particularly in urban areas- and to motivate the international health community to fight for a better and safer life on our planet.

Specific objectives are 1. To provide a platform for interested colleagues, alumni and students to interchange experiences learn from each other and establish a collaborative network. 2. To strengthen the awareness of planetary health issues particularly in urban areas with a focus on environmental, social and climatic determinants of health and 3. To explore research needs for changing the current trends in planetary health.

Our interdisciplinary symposium will highlight the diversity of current or future research efforts related to improving or maintaining the well-being of all, but particularly of vulnerable population groups by analyzing social, environmental, climatic and biological risk factors for health. Contributions will particularly, but not exclusively, relate to the challenges of urban living, the spread of communicable diseases and climate change. The list of speakers, coming from different academic backgrounds and having fought for years and even decades for improved health conditions particularly of disadvantaged population groups in the Global South shows the wide range of disciplines contributing to our theme and the state of the art: where we are and where we are going.

DRAFT AGENDA
International Symposium, 25-26. Sept. 2025

<i>Inaugural Ceremony</i>
Welcome address (10`each): To be confirmed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K. Kriegelstein (Rector Uni Freiburg) • P. Olschewski (Minister of Science and Art, BW) • Sunday Omilabu, Lagos University, Nigeria
Introduction on behalf of the organizers (Axel Kroeger) Welcome to alumni and students (Sonia Diaz-Monsalve)
Key Note Speech on Planetary Health (Andy Haines, LSTMH, London) with discussion
Coffee Break
Urban living
Human settlements: Challenges and solutions (Graham Alabaster, UN-HABITAT, Geneva)
Built environment: Challenges and solutions (Eberhard Rothfuss, Uni Bayreuth)
Challenges for the Youth in urban environments (Nicole Webster, PennState Univ., USA)
Lunch
Challenges of infectious disease elimination (P. Olliaro, Geneva/Oxford)
Challenges of zoonotic diseases/OneHealth approach (Martin Schwemmler, Freiburg)
Gender aspects in communicable diseases (M. Otmani TDR-WHO)
Coffee Break
Climate and epidemics (Laith Hussain Gothenburg, Axel Kroeger, Freiburg)
Urban green spaces on thermal buffering (Loic Gillerot, CERAC, Gent, Belgium)
TBD
<i>Reception at Peterhofkeller in the evening</i>
DAY 2
Key Note Speech Dr. Margarita Ronderos, Dr. Nubia Munoz, Colombia "From Local to Global: A Journey in Public Health" with discussion
Introduction to poster session
Coffee Break
Panel discussion on Career Pathways (Alumni) Sonia Diaz-M., Gabriela Penn, Alumni (4 to 5 TBD): Potential countries: Yemen, Libia, Colombia, UK, USA
Poster session (students & lecturers about their work or research)
<i>10 years Master celebration</i>
Closing lunch
Alumni and students