

AIR QUALITY AND HEALTH



CLEAN AIR DAY 2025



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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**



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BACKGROUND



AIR POLLUTION AND ITS IMPACT

- Defn of air pollution: Air pollution is contamination of the **indoor** or **outdoor** environment by any chemical, physical or biological agent that modifies the natural characteristics of the atmosphere. WHO, 2025; *household combustion devices, motor vehicles, industrial facilities and forest fires*
- WHO data show that almost all of the global population (99%) breathe air that exceeds WHO guideline limits and contains high levels of pollutants, with low- and middle-income countries suffering from the highest exposures.



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HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT SCORE CARD









Health and environment scorecard South Africa



Summary score: 54

Exposure score: 57 Health score: 62 Policy score: 44

The scores represent simple averages. [See methods and results for additional information.](#) The scores are out of 100.

	Extent of the problem	Health impact	Policies
<div>Air pollution</div> <div>View actions and interventions</div>	<div><div>4 x the WHO air quality guideline value for PM_{2.5}</div></div> <div><div>WHO Guideline (annual mean): 5 µg/m³</div><div>Annual country mean: 20 µg/m³</div></div>	<div><div>24%</div><div>Deaths from stroke and ischaemic heart disease caused by air pollution¹</div></div>	<div><div>Existence of legal standards for PM_{2.5}</div><div>yes</div></div> <div><div><div>Compliant with WHO Air Quality Guidelines</div><div>no</div></div></div> <div><div><div>Existence of national policy on household energy</div><div>yes</div></div></div>
	<div><div>11%</div><div>Population without clean fuels and technology for cooking</div></div>	<div>¹ Air pollution causes many other diseases and adverse health outcomes, only stroke and ischaemic heart disease have been chosen for this scorecard.</div>	

INTERVENTIONS BY HEALTH



Legislative framework

- Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act 56 of 1974), as amended; Regulations defining the Scope of the Profession of Environmental Health (Government Gazette No. 32334, Notice No. R. 698, dated 26 June 2009)
- Domestic Indoor Air Quality Guidelines
- Draft Air Quality and Health Strategy
- Capacity building of stakeholders



Guideline for the management of domestic indoor air quality

A guide for Environmental Health Practitioners in South Africa



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INTERVENTIONS BY HEALTH



Stakeholder engagement:

- National Air Quality and Health Focus Group meetings since 25 November 2022 & meet on quarterly basis. (*training, policy and M&E; Community engagement and research*)
- DFFE such as Priority areas engagements etc.
- Community engagements

Air pollution related complaints and media queries

Education and awareness of community members. Leverage support from stakeholders (IEC)

M&E (DHIS):

- *Child under 5 years pneumonia incidence*
- *Child under 5 years pneumonia case fatality rate*

CONCLUSION



- Research interface policy (e.g. Burden of disease report, DHB report etc.)
- Collaborations + integration
- ***All hands-on deck – together we can do more***



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