

# ELRHA'S RESEARCH FOR HEALTH IN HUMANITARIAN CRISES (R2HC) AND THE AFRICAN POPULATION AND HEALTH RESEARCH CENTER (APHRC) RESEARCH FORUM

## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS

### OVERVIEW

Elrha is a global organisation that finds solutions to complex problems through humanitarian research and innovation. The African Population and Health Research Center ([APHRC](#)) is a premier research-to-policy institution, generating evidence, strengthening research and related capacity in the African research and development ecosystem, and engaging policy to inform action on health and development.

Together we are co-hosting a 3-day event, held in Nairobi, Kenya, between 7-9 May 2025. The Forum will bring together researchers from academic institutions, particularly those from low-and-middle-income countries (LMICs) affected by crisis, humanitarian organisations, and other key stakeholders. The Forum will serve as a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and knowledge exchange, exploring pressing humanitarian challenges and the role of research evidence, and equitable research partnerships, in addressing these.

Recognising the impact of the climate crisis on the health of populations affected by humanitarian crisis, the title and overarching theme of the Forum is:

### **"Bridging Global Health Research and Humanitarian Response in a Climate-Impacted World".**

We are inviting humanitarian health research, policy, and practice experts, with experience relevant to the key objectives and themes of the Forum, to contribute to making the Forum a stimulating and engaging event. This is not a traditional scientific conference, and creative contributions relevant to our objectives are welcome.

#### **Forum Objectives:**

1. Galvanising action on evidence gaps for climate-induced health impacts

2. Shifting power to lower-and-middle-income countries (LMICs)
3. Promoting research quality, ethics, and impact
4. Fostering collaboration and partnerships

The 2025 Research Forum will be held alongside and in connection with the [Fogarty-led Global Forum on Humanitarian Health Research \(GFH2R\)](#) to capitalise on our joint efforts to progress humanitarian health research.

**Deadline for application: 23.59 GMT, 15 December 2024.**

For information and resources related to the key themes of the Forum, please refer to the [Background Note](#).

## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS: BACKGROUND

Elrha's Research for Health in Humanitarian Crises (R2HC) programme was established in 2013, aiming to improve health outcomes for people affected by humanitarian crises by strengthening the evidence base for public health interventions. Since then we have funded more than 100 studies across a range of public health fields; identified critical public health evidence gaps, and funded research priority settings in thematic areas; supported research teams to translate new knowledge into accessible products and increase research uptake by evidence users; and shared lessons on how rigorous research can be effectively conducted in crisis settings.

One of our strategic objectives is to share learning and good practice on conducting health research in humanitarian settings with the community of practice. Previous R2HC fora in 2017 and 2019 were held in the UK, fostering knowledge exchange on [accountability to communities; equitable partnerships; research methods; and research uptake and impact](#). The 2025 Forum will build on their success, enhancing the focus on learning from experience and operationalising good practices, with a more central emphasis on diverse and equitable participation from researchers in LMICs.

We are partnering with the African Population Health Research Center (APHRC), a respected health research institute headquartered in Nairobi, in co-designing the Forum. Our partnership aims to ensure the evidence needs of the region are reflected in the Forum content, and platform the contributions of national and regional stakeholders, including APHRC.

**Eligibility and selection:**

Individuals aligned to our intended audience are welcome to apply to be contributors. Applicants do not have to be R2HC grantees. We will select contributors considering:

- Relevance of the submission to the Forum objective(s)
- Diversity of disciplines, geographies, experiences in health research in humanitarian crisis settings.

This is a competitive process, and we expect up to 50 contributors to be selected. Given our limited capacity at the Forum, if we receive more suitable applications than we have space for, we will prioritise applicants from a country or region affected by crisis.

While all applications will be assessed on individual merits, we will only be able to invite limited numbers of people representing any one research study or organisation.

We encourage you to coordinate with collaborators/colleagues before applying.

We will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate any accessibility requirements.

### **Costs of participation**

We anticipate that all contributors to the Forum will have their travel and accommodation costs covered, either directly, or through existing R2HC-grants.

### **Intended Audience**

The Forum aims to include diverse stakeholders to achieve the Forum objectives, including:

- R2HC grantees and alumni from research institutions in high, middle and low-income countries
- Humanitarian health policy-makers and practitioners with expertise relevant to the Forum agenda
- Researchers within humanitarian organisations at local, national and global levels
- Stakeholders with expertise in the thematic priority of climate and health (relevant to humanitarian and crisis-affected settings)
- Representatives of funders supporting health research in humanitarian crisis settings

### **Forum objectives and focus**

Applications will be assessed for their relevance to the Forum aims and our core focus on humanitarian health.

**Humanitarian:** R2HC aims to strengthen the evidence base for public health interventions in humanitarian crises (including crises driven by conflict, climate-related disaster, infectious disease outbreak and involuntary movement of people), to contribute to better health outcomes for people affected.

**Health:** A broad framing of mental and physical health and wellbeing is used, to reflect the range of humanitarian interventions that save lives, build resilience and promote improved health outcomes for people affected by crisis.

If you are unsure whether your contribution is aligned with our focus, please read the Background Note before applying.

## **OBJECTIVE 1: GALVANISING ACTION ON EVIDENCE GAPS FOR CLIMATE-INDUCED HEALTH IMPACTS**

### **Background:**

Climate change is an existential problem that pushes people into humanitarian crises and worsens / affects the ability of actors to respond to crises over time. A recent [situational analysis published by Elrha](#) highlights the significant evidence gap on this topic, and the need for increased engagement and visibility of humanitarian actors and researchers in dialogue on climate and health.

**Aim:**

We are looking for contributors to share cutting edge, rigorous, and/or novel research and evaluation findings that will advance our knowledge and understanding of the interlinkages between climate change and humanitarian health and propose solutions to improve human resilience in such settings.

Contributions may be in the areas of:

- Effects of climate change on health in humanitarian settings
- Research at the intersection of climate change and humanitarian crises, showcasing examples of resilience (at all levels)
- Good practice in climate and humanitarian health co-benefits
- Research methods in climate science as relevant to humanitarian health
- Research / evaluations of interventions that aim to improve climate change resilience among populations affected by humanitarian crisis.

**For Objective 1 only:** As Elrha is closely collaborating with the [Fogarty-led Global Forum on Humanitarian Health Research \(GFH2R\)](#), those who have already submitted an application to the GFH2R relating to climate and health may also be invited to participate in Elrha's event. However, as the two Fora have separate audiences and objectives, please also submit an application to contribute to the R2HC Forum specifically - this will ensure we review your application and that it is also considered for our Forum.

## OBJECTIVE 2: SHIFTING POWER TO LOWER- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES (LMICS)

**Background:**

There is an imbalance in funding, voice and power both in the global health research ecosystem, and between institutions that are responding to crises in the humanitarian ecosystem. The call to 'shift power'<sup>1</sup> aims to ensure researchers and humanitarian experts from LMICs lead and drive international research agendas and partnerships, that local expertise is respected and valued, and that research contributes to more meaningful and sustainable outcomes.

**Aim:**

We are seeking contributions that explore and demonstrate how to shift power to researchers and humanitarian actors in LMICs and to facilitate effective coordination and communication in research collaborations. We are particularly interested in

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<sup>1</sup> Further background and resources on both the humanitarian and academic debates relevant to the Forum are provided in the Background Note.

contributions and case examples which identify specific barriers, practical solutions, and actionable recommendations.

Contributions may be in the areas of:

- Explorations of pathways, initiatives, and mechanisms that facilitate LMIC-driven research studies, and research-practice partnerships which empower humanitarian experts from LMICs, including capacity strengthening activities within research studies; and that enhance LMIC roles in the production, analysis, uptake and dissemination of knowledge
- Explorations at institutional and funder level: research partnership models, policy changes and funding guidelines that enable LMIC leadership in research initiatives, and LMIC empowerment in monitoring and evaluation of their outcomes; locally-owned research prioritisation and agenda setting; funding and resource allocation to LMIC research initiatives; and capacity building programmes and collaborative research networks which strengthen the research infrastructure, leadership and skills of LMIC institutions.
- Ethical and culturally sensitive research frameworks and mechanisms that aim to shift power and enhance evidence use by local humanitarian health actors e.g., research protocols that align with local values; frameworks that promote transparency and accountability and maintain trust and collaboration; locally-led ethical review.

We also welcome contributions in the spirit of this objective on other topics relevant to humanitarian health research that are not specifically mentioned above, and contributions that link the objective of 'Shifting the Power' with applications to other Forum focus areas.

### OBJECTIVE 3: PROMOTING RESEARCH QUALITY, ETHICS, AND IMPACT

#### **Background:**

In humanitarian crises, access to quality research evidence can inform effective interventions, improve health outcomes, and save lives. However, conducting research and ensuring uptake and evidence use in such contexts pose unique challenges, ethical considerations and operational constraints. Study designs and research methods are increasingly complex and diverse, requiring modifications to maintain methodological rigour and tailoring for specific contexts. There is a continued need to foster knowledge exchange on rapidly emerging approaches and new ideas among the community of practice.

#### **Aim:**

Complementing curated sessions on research uptake and impact from the R2HC portfolio /invited grantees, we are seeking contributions that describe approaches to

address the specific and complex needs of researchers in humanitarian health aiming to conduct rigorous, effective and ethical research.

Contributions may be in the areas of:

- Novel study designs and analytic approaches in humanitarian health research; new analytical approaches for quantitative and qualitative data; improvements that address study design, data availability and quality challenges; and examples of effectiveness studies (cost, efficacy, delivery strategies) of health interventions.
- Exploring ethical challenges faced as a result of conducting rigorous and novel research designs and analytical approaches, and/or how these were overcome.
- Examples and explorations of ethical tools, frameworks and approaches that take into account the specific needs and challenges of researchers in crisis settings
- Community-based participatory research (methods and approaches that have ensured research questions, methodologies, and outcomes are driven by community needs and contextually informed)
- Research methods, study designs and approaches that facilitate evidence use and research uptake by humanitarian organisations e.g.: those which capture inputs of humanitarian practitioners, utilise secondary data from humanitarian organisations, inform programme design or humanitarian guidelines /policy development

## OBJECTIVE 4: FOSTERING COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Recognising that equitable participation in research agendas and partnerships requires active convening and engagement, R2HC will provide space in the Forum for networking and collaboration among participants. We are not seeking additional contributions on this Objective at this time.

### **Forum Format and Modalities**

The Forum is residential and will take place across 2.5 days. It will be participatory, fostering opportunities for individuals to share and learn.

This is not a traditional scientific conference and will not platform presentations of “findings” of research studies, except for Objective 1.

The agenda and format of the Forum will comprise a variety of modalities which may include [lightning talks](#), [Pecha Kucha](#), workshops, breakout seminars, panels and multimedia exhibitions. Potential applicants should consider what format / modality would be best suited to their contribution, as well as the objective to which they will contribute.

Webinars, which will take place before the Forum, will be interactive, with specific themed topics, and open to all to register.

## HOW TO APPLY

All applicants must fill out a short form following the links to our application portal below. We also welcome inclusion of examples or outputs which support your application, such as multimedia, videos, podcasts, or infographics. Examples must be concise (<3 minutes to listen/watch/read).

Applications are requested in English language, as the Forum will be in English.

However, if you prefer to contribute in a different language, please mention this in your application. We will consider non-English contributions for online communications and webinars where there may be ability to translate or caption materials.

## SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

All applications must be submitted via the Common Grant Application (CGA) portal.

- First time users: [set up an account and apply here](#).
- Returning users: [login and apply here](#).

For any questions about using the application portal please contact [r2hc@elrha.org](mailto:r2hc@elrha.org).

The deadline to submit your application is **23:59 GMT Sunday 15 December**.

## TIMELINE

- 28 October 2024: Call for contributors opens
- 15 December 2024: Call for contributors closes
- 10 February 2025: Applicants informed of acceptance / rejection
- 21 February 2025: Successful contributors informed of modality they have been assigned
- 7-9 May 2025: Research Forum