GEO Health Community of Practice (CoP)
Community Telecon
April 26, 2022

**In Attendance:** 19 participants
John Haynes (NASA HQ), Juli Trtanj (NOAA), Helena Chapman (NASA HQ/BAH), Trisha Castranio (NIEHS/NIH), Bob Chen (CIESIN/Columbia Climate School, Columbia Univ.; NASA SEDAC), Mona Nasser (Univ. of Plymouth, UK), Douglas Rao (NC Institute for Climate Studies), Ben Zaitchik (Johns Hopkins Univ.), Josh Colston (Univ. of Virginia School of Medicine), Antar Jutla (Univ. of Florida), Moiz Usmani (Univ. of Florida), Olayinka Osuolale (Elizade Univ. Nigeria), José Ortiz (PAHO), Bernd Eggen (formerly PHE, Met Office), Nick Odgen (Public Health Agency of Canada), Ashiraf Kyabainze (At HAUSE Limited), Melissa MacDonald (Environment Climate Change Canada), Mercy Borbor (Escuela Superior Politecnica del Litoral, Ecuador), Sam.

**Summary Notes:**
*Prepared by Helena Chapman (NASA HQ/BAH)*

**John Haynes (NASA HQ)** and **Juli Trtanj (NOAA)** opened the telecon by welcoming all participants.

**John Haynes (NASA HQ)** mentioned that the [GEO Virtual Symposium 2022](https://www.goeos.org/virtualsymposium) will be held from May 2-5, 2022. Then, he mentioned that the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine will support the [Towards a Future of Environmental Health Sciences - A Workshop](https://www.nationalacademies.org/main出国留学/our-work) on April 26-27, 2022.

**Juli Trtanj (NOAA)** mentioned that the said that the National Integrated Heat Health Information System (NIHHIS) [National Meeting](https://www.nihihs.gov) will be held on April 26-28, 2022. She highlighted that the meeting will cover different topic areas surrounding heat and health, with thematic areas: Defining the Problem (day 1), Building Equitable Community Resilience (day 2), and Building Equitable Human Resilience (day 3). Next, she confirmed that the EO4Health Implementation Plan has been submitted to the GEO Secretariat. Finally, she mentioned that they would like to circle back to the deep dive of the CoP/AfriGEO Special Edition Webinar as well as discuss potential connections related to the scoping call for the Belmont Forum and funders of in-kind contributors exploring environment and health topics.

**Helena Chapman (NASA HQ/BAH)** said that summary notes and flash talk presentations are available on the CoP/AfriGEO Special Edition Webinar [webpage](https://www.acme.com).

**Helena Chapman (NASA HQ/BAH)** introduced **Chandana Unnithan (UN COPUOS STSC Space and Global Health WG)**, who highlighted a technology intervention (Lifeguard App) that addressed the opioid crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic. This digital health tool connects solo substance users with emergency services should medical help be needed. For example, as users set the timer prior to consuming drugs, if the user does not respond when the timer is up, then the Lifeguard App sends a text-to-voice message to emergency services informing them of a potential overdose. Due to a significant spike in opioid-related deaths in March 2020, the British Columbia Ministry of Health activated the Lifeguard App for public use in May 2020. She confirmed that no personal data are retained, and that collected information is anonymized for tracking location. Since its public deployment, she highlighted that the Lifeguard App has saved a total of 45 lives as of April 2022, with 14 lives saved during the first nine months of deployment.
Juli Trtanj (NOAA) commented that persons who are medically dependent on opioids and other substances may be more susceptible to heat waves and other mental health concerns. She wondered if this tool could be integrated into heat wave prevention and response initiatives. Chandana Unnithan (UN COPUOS STSC Space and Global Health WG) said that this technology can be applied to heat waves and other topics where early warning systems can be useful to prevent emergencies. She stated that this Lifeguard App has been customized for different areas to reflect any public health emergency, including contactless solutions for elder care. She noted that this domain is very sensitive, and that the tool does not retain any personalized data or geocoded tracking information. Juli Trtanj (NOAA) said that since elderly and persons with mental health disorders are most vulnerable to heat waves, she wondered if this Lifeguard App could be explored and implemented in the NOAA community-led heat mapping campaigns (NOAA and communities to map heat inequities in 11 states). Chandana Unnithan (UN COPUOS STSC Space and Global Health WG) commented that the early stages of this innovative technology were presented to the UN and the White House in 2019.

Olayinka Osuolale (Elizade Univ. Nigeria) asked if a third-party could operate the Lifeguard App while the user has experienced an overdose and could send a false report that the user is healthy. Chandana Unnithan (UN COPUOS STSC Space and Global Health WG) said that there is a unique number that connects directly to 9-11, and that only users can extend the timer or cancel the call. She stated that no challenges of third-party interference have been noted to date.

Helena Chapman (NASA HQ/BAH) asked about the motivation to develop the Lifeguard App. Chandana Unnithan (UN COPUOS STSC Space and Global Health WG) said that the conversation to develop the Lifeguard App was started, since governments, clinicians and public health practitioners observed an increased number of individuals under 40 years of age experiencing opioid overdoses. She commented that health agencies are involved to provide advice on geofencing and leverage available technology, but that not all regions are connected. Juli Trtanj (NOAA) said that this innovative tool would be of interest to the development of a Climate and Health Community of Practice in the Americas region with Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research.

John Haynes (NASA HQ) and Juli Trtanj (NOAA) thanked CoP members for their continued contributions to the field and engagement in the group discussion. They agreed that these teleconferences provide an opportunity to share information, connect researchers, and leverage resources that can amplify current activities using Earth observations for public health applications.

John Haynes (NASA HQ) closed the teleconference and mentioned that the next community teleconference will be scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, 2022 at 8:30AM EDT (GMT-4).

Adjourned: 11:50AM EDT (GMT-4)