



## World Environmental Health Day 2021

### **Prioritizing Environmental Health for healthier communities in global recovery.**

Environmental Health workforce guarantee that the environment around us, at home, workplace, school, place where we go shopping or where we will simply look for some form of fun, is safe, hygienic and healthy. These professionals, when working in the field, have a superior knowledge of local customs; they are familiar with the risks and know how to get the "message" across. Deep down they act locally thinking globally.

Municipalities and local communities are the natural leaders to plan based on Environmental Health. They develop the local economy, including transport, tourism and industry, and can play a leading role in healthy planning if they are alert to the potential risks and benefits that can happen as well as having access to the tools that can support their needs.

We are going through difficult times, due the COVID19, declared by the WHO as Pandemic. This global problem, with alarming levels of deaths and infections worldwide, without distinguishing the poor or the rich, is directly linked to the lack of prevention and the failure to meet the objectives we have set for Sustainable Development. This Pandemic has come to demonstrate the vital role of the Environmental Health workforce worldwide to face this challenging time for all of humanity. It is colleagues who, by tracking contacts, inspecting establishments (teaching, commerce, industrial, etc.) in the implementation of preventive measures to combat COVID 19 and enforcing government guidelines, are preponderant in overcoming this Pandemic.

Universal vaccine distribution has the ability to save lives and reduce mortality. Vaccine manufacturers are encouraged to work with emerging countries and provide vaccines on a timely and affordable scale and at the same time the governments, around the world, should make the vaccine available free of cost to those who cannot pay, or distribute that at affordable rates. Meanwhile, the Environmental Health workforce, should help the governments to act together on developing a policy specific to the COVID-19 vaccine; from preparing resources — both material and human — for storage, distribution and delivery, with the best safety and hygiene conditions.

On May 26, 2020, WHO released the "[Manifesto for a healthy recovery from COVID-19](#)" based on six key ideas. The purpose of this Manifesto is to seize the moment! The world, because of COVID-19, is going through the worst recession in decades, with losses in business, and consequently in jobs and income, which will bring irreparable damage to the achievement of the desired 17 SDGs. On the other hand, this pandemic has come to "uncover" the inequalities, namely concerning existing healthcare in the world. There is therefore a need for a fast recovery and an unprecedented investment worldwide. However, this investment cannot alone be made in order to return to normality from COVID-19. Investments must be made to avoid environmental degradation and



# IFEH International Federation of Environmental Health

pollution, in particular, not favoring the growing emission of greenhouse gases that are already known in common sense to cause global warming and promote climate change. We have to invest that same money to promote a fairer, more sustainable economy, for a more equitable, environmentally and more sustainable society, in a better, healthier and greener world (WHO, 2020).

It is necessary that the world understands there is an integral connection between the environment, health and the economy. It is therefore important to invest in healthy and green recovery, close to all communities, with the support of the Environmental Health workforce and with collaboration from the International Federation of Environmental Health. That's why we choose this year theme for Environmental Health World Day 2021 - **Prioritizing Environmental Health for healthier communities in global recovery.**

**Susana Paixão**  
**President IFEH**