IFEH

International Federation
of Environmental Health

REPORT

by David Nemakonde

on behalf of IFEH

Chairman IFEH Africa Group

Participation at the

World Federation of Public Health Associations

WFPHA

World 18th World Congress on Public Health Cape Town, South Africa

September 6 – 9, 2026

The 18th World Congress on Public Health took place from September 6th to 9th, 2026. It was organized by the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) in collaboration with the Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA).

The theme of the Congress was "Health Without Borders: Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability," highlighting the pressing need for unified action in a world affected by conflict, political turmoil, epidemics, and systemic inequalities.

This report focuses on the participation of David Nemakonde, who represented the IFEH at the aforementioned Congress. This event provided a strategic opportunity to bolster IFEH's global advocacy efforts and to engage directly with international partners regarding environmental health matters. The Congress drew 2,902 participants from 94 countries, with a notable representation from Africa, the host continent. It featured 402 sessions, which included both plenary and presentation sessions. Delegates came from various disciplines, including environmental health professionals. It was pleasing to observe that environmental health professionals played significant roles, with some presenting and others chairing the sessions.

As the World Federation of Public Health Association acted as the primary key stakeholder, it was a great move for the IFEH to re-establish the collaboration going forward. These two organisations have sustained a long-standing partnership, which has recently been reaffirmed in line with one of the IFEH's objectives that promotes collaboration with key stakeholders and related professionals to empower the communities we serve to reach their full potential.

By participating in the Congress, the IFEH aligned itself with its strategic objectives, thereby increasing its visibility through the dissemination of guidelines pertaining to global, environmental, public health, and general health matters.

On behalf of the IFEH, David Nemakonde held a side meeting with Bettina Borisch, CEO of the WFPHA. The discussions were focused on fortifying the collaborative relationship between IFEH and WFPHA. During this meeting, Bettina Borisch introduced me to Dr. Cadence Kaumoana and Seiuli Ativalu Lemuelu, the President of the Public Health Association of New Zealand and Board member respectively. This introduction was part of the preparations for the forthcoming 19th World Congress on Public Health, scheduled to take place in Auckland, New Zealand, from September 4th to 9th, 2028. Dr. Cadence Kaumoana is set to collaborate with Tanya Morrison. In reciprocation, IFEH is anticipated to engage with the Public Health Association of Uganda concerning the 19th World Congress on Environmental Health, which will be hosted in Uganda in 2028.

Bettina Borisch urged IFEH to actively connect with WFPHA member national associations across various countries. Following this, David Nemakonde promptly initiated a dialogue with the Public Health Association of South Africa to establish a working relationship.

Given that IFEH was unable to secure an exhibition stand, I coordinated with the University of Johannesburg to showcase our materials. I successfully created a QR code that provides access to the IFEH pamphlet detailing the advantages of IFEH membership, which was displayed alongside lapel badges and Glow to Show hygiene training materials.

Some of the resolutions made at World Congress are

a. Decolonizing Global Health: Transitioning from top-down, donor-centric agendas to empower local African leadership, amplify regional voices, and enhance research in the development of global health solutions.
b. Health Equity Amid Crises: Tackling systemic vulnerabilities highlighted by climate change, political unrest, conflict, and displacement, emphasizing that health is a fundamental human right that transcends national boundaries.
c. The Future of Primary Care: Reinforcing strong primary health care systems as the foundation for achieving universal health coverage and ensuring preparedness for pandemics.
d. One Health Approach: Merging human, animal, and environmental health frameworks to improve the prediction and mitigation of future zoonotic and environmental crises.
e. Democracy and Governance: Acknowledging that transparent democratic governance and fair resource distribution are essential social determinants of health

David Nemakonde with Prof. Bettina Borisch
CEO WFPHA

David Nemakonde with Dr. Cadence Kaumoana
President of Public Health Association of New Zealand

David Nemakonde representing IFEH

Delegate wanted to know more about IFEH