



The PHCA Field Guide: Actions and Ideas for a Healthier Planet

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A. List of High-Impact, Low-Cost Planetary Health Initiatives

Categories	Initiatives	Actions	Expected Budget	Description
1. Education & Awareness	Planetary Health Intro Presentations	Develop and present talks on Planetary Health to student groups, clinics, and local NGOs. ⁽¹⁾	Free	These presentations serve as foundational awareness sessions on what Planetary Health is and why it matters. You can tailor the content for specific audiences, such as medical students, public health faculty, or community health workers. Use PHA's official slide decks, videos, or your own visual aids. Present in classrooms, clinics, community halls, or even online webinars. Encourage audience interaction and allow time for questions to deepen engagement.
	Campus/Community Poster Campaigns	Use Canva and recycled printing resources to raise awareness (e.g., climate-health links, air pollution).	Low-cost	A highly visible, low-cost initiative, poster campaigns can be used to highlight key Planetary Health topics like climate change and health, air pollution, water insecurity, or sustainable diets. Design posters using free tools like Canva and print on recycled paper or display them digitally through campus monitors, WhatsApp groups, or university websites. In community settings, posters can be displayed in clinics, schools, or marketplaces.
	Planetary Health Film Screenings + Discussions	Use open-access documentaries (e.g., <i>Before the Flood</i> , <i>The Human Element</i>) with Q&A sessions.	Free\ Low-cost	Organize screenings of open-access or educational films that focus on environmental and health crises (e.g., <i>The Human Element</i> , <i>Chasing Ice</i>). After the screening, facilitate a guided discussion to help attendees reflect on the health connections and local relevance of the themes.

				These events can be held in classrooms, community centers, or even outdoors using projectors and blankets for informal "green cinema" events.
	Mini Planetary Health Curriculum Workshops	Train students or health professionals on key themes using PHCA educational tools.	Free	Short workshops (1–2 hours) can introduce core Planetary Health themes through interactive teaching. Design workshops for university students, teachers, or healthcare workers using existing case studies or the "Planetary Health: Protecting Nature to Protect Ourselves" textbook. You can include small group exercises, role-playing, or real-life scenario analysis to increase understanding and practical application.
2. Engagement & Activism	Green Pledges / Climate Action Pledges	Invite students to commit to personal and community changes.	Free	Invite individuals to sign a personal or institutional pledge to adopt climate-healthy behaviors, such as reducing meat consumption, using public transport, or conserving water. These can be printed as cards or collected online via Google Forms. Publicly display the pledges on a "Green Wall" or social media to celebrate participants and encourage wider participation.
	Social Media Challenges (e.g., #PHWeek, #GreenClinicDay)	Create campaigns tied to global health days or Earth Week.	Free	Leverage platforms like Instagram, Facebook, or TikTok to run creative awareness challenges, such as documenting eco-friendly meals, walking instead of driving, or upcycling waste. Use official PHA hashtags and invite peers to tag their friends. You can also partner with student clubs to amplify reach. These are especially effective for engaging youth and building momentum.
	Campus Sustainability Mapping Walk	Organize guided walks highlighting climate risks and solutions on campus.	Free	Organize a walking tour highlighting environmental issues and solutions on campus, such as solar panels, waste bins, or areas prone to flooding. Prepare a map and talking points in advance.

				Participants learn to observe their environment through a Planetary Health lens. This can be tied to Earth Day or World Environment Day.
	Monthly Planetary Health Dialogues	Host open forums with guest speakers or peer discussions on rotating topics.	Free	Host a recurring dialogue series where students, staff, or community members discuss themes like heat stress, food security, or biodiversity. Each session could include a brief expert presentation followed by open discussion or debate. These events build a culture of critical thinking, interdisciplinary dialogue, and problem-solving around environmental health issues.
3. Hands-on Projects	Campus or Community Clean-up Drives	Include educational stations about the health impact of waste and plastics.	Low-cost	Simple but impactful, clean-up drives mobilize volunteers to collect waste in targeted areas such as riversides, clinics, or neighborhoods. You can provide basic gloves and bags and coordinate with local waste management for proper disposal. Use this opportunity to talk about pollution and its direct health consequences, particularly on vulnerable populations.
	Tree Planting or Community Garden Projects	Engage volunteers and use local seeds or partner with environmental NGOs.	Low to medium cost; may need permissions/tools	Organize local tree-planting events in collaboration with local authorities or schools. For community gardens, identify a small plot on campus or in a neighborhood to grow herbs or vegetables. This initiative encourages sustainable food production and urban greening while promoting mental well-being and ecological connection.
	Plastic-Free Campus Campaign	Collaborate with the administration to reduce single-use plastics.	Free\ Low-cost	Launch a campaign encouraging students and staff to reduce single-use plastics by switching to reusable items. Organize a “plastic audit” day, distribute infographics about plastic-related health risks, and advocate for administrative support (e.g., water refill stations or banning plastic cutlery).

				This initiative combines behavior change with policy advocacy.
4. Health-Focused Innovations	Heat-Health Awareness Campaigns	Share information on heat stress and hydration for laborers or students.	Free	Raise awareness about the health impacts of heatwaves, especially for outdoor workers and vulnerable populations. Disseminate flyers or infographics with tips on hydration, sun protection, and signs of heat exhaustion. You can conduct this campaign during summer or in advance of predicted heat events, in both campus and community settings.
	Air Quality Monitoring & Health Messaging	Use apps like AirVisual or partner with local researchers.	Low-cost if using mobile-based sensors	Partner with local researchers or environmental departments to access air quality data, or use free mobile apps. Create simple visuals showing pollution trends and their health implications (e.g., asthma, cardiovascular disease). Place them near clinics, lecture halls, or public spaces. You can also advise people on protective behaviors like mask use or reducing exposure during peak hours.
5. Media & Writing	PHCA Blog Posts	Write for the PHA blog about local health-environment 	Free	Write and publish blog posts on the PHA website or your university page. Topics can include reflections on your ambassador journey, summaries of your activities, or interviews with local experts. Blog writing amplifies your work globally and serves as a resource for others interested in implementing similar initiatives.
	Short Video Interviews / Stories	Document local narratives about climate impacts on health.	Free	Collect and publish 1–3 minute interviews with local farmers, students, or patients discussing how environmental changes have impacted their health or livelihood. Use a smartphone and basic editing tools. These personal stories are powerful advocacy tools that humanize the data and broaden engagement.
	Planetary Health Zine or Student Magazine	Feature stories, tips, art, and solutions from	Low-cost, digital preferred	Design a digital or printed magazine featuring original art, stories, essays, and health tips that reflect the local

		students and local residents.		environmental context. Distribute via campus email or at health events. Invite contributions from different disciplines to foster interdisciplinary thinking. Keep it low-cost by using free software and digital formats.
6. Capacity Building	Student-led Planetary Health Club or Committee	Connect departments (public health, agriculture, engineering, etc.) for collaboration.	Free	Establish a dedicated club to coordinate Planetary Health initiatives across departments. Use the club as a hub for volunteers, brainstorming, and student leadership development. Recruit a diverse team with roles like communications, event planning, and outreach. Regular meetings keep momentum and accountability.
	Train-the-Trainer" Peer Education Model	Equip students to teach others about Planetary Health concepts.	Free	Select and train a small group of student or community leaders who can then deliver Planetary Health sessions in their own circles. Use interactive toolkits, case studies, and games to make the sessions engaging. This model builds capacity, ensures sustainability, and multiplies your outreach with minimal resources.

B. Bold Ideas for Transformative Planetary Health Action

Categories	Initiatives	Actions	Expected Budget	Description
1. Planetary Health in Clinical Settings	Sustainable Clinic Toolkit Pilot	Promote energy-saving, water conservation, waste sorting in health facilities.	Low-to-medium cost	This initiative involves designing or piloting a toolkit for outpatient clinics or health centers to evaluate and improve their environmental practices. The toolkit can include checklists for energy efficiency (e.g., turning off equipment when not in use), water conservation, biomedical waste segregation, and eco-friendly procurement (e.g., avoiding single-use plastic). Implementation may involve partnering with medical or nursing students for an audit, followed by staff training.
	Waiting Room Infographics	Design simple posters explaining the link between climate and health for clinics.	Free	This low-cost educational tool targets patients and caregivers by using waiting room spaces to convey health-environment links. Infographics can cover topics such as "Heat and Your Heart," "Clean Air for Children," or "Why Biodiversity Matters for Your Medicine." Designed on Canva or similar tools, these can be printed and laminated for repeated use. You can pilot this in clinics, university hospitals, or community health centers.
2. Planetary Health & Traditional Knowledge Integration	Story Circles with Elders/Farmers	Facilitate oral history sessions on environmental change and resilience.	Free	Story circles create a safe space for intergenerational dialogue on environmental changes, health, and traditional resilience strategies. You can organize sessions with farmers, community elders, or pastoralists who share their lived experiences with climate variability, ecosystem changes, and health. Students or researchers can facilitate, record, and document these stories for advocacy or education.
3. Planetary Health Ambassadors for Schools (Program)	Train university students to deliver school talks (ages 10–17) with games or posters.		Free\ Low-cost	Develop a training program for university students to visit primary and secondary schools and deliver fun, age-appropriate Planetary Health sessions. Use visual games (e.g., climate-health matching cards), posters, or simple experiments (e.g., heat from dark vs. light surfaces). Include modules on clean water, waste, and local biodiversity. This builds youth awareness and leadership skills.

4. Zero-Waste Campus Meal Challenge	Partner with cafeterias to promote plant-based meals, zero packaging day.	Low-medium cost	Collaborate with campus dining services to run themed days, such as "Meatless Monday" or "Plastic-Free Friday." Create awareness posters, table tents, and social media content explaining the health and environmental benefits of plant-based eating and reducing packaging waste. Run surveys to collect feedback and potentially advocate for menu changes.
5. Green Audit of Campus Buildings	Assess lighting, water usage, air quality, waste management (collaborate with sustainability offices or engineering students).	Free\Low-cost	Involve students (especially those in engineering, environmental science, or public health) in auditing campus facilities. Use simple tools (e.g., lux meters, water flow measuring, waste sorting logs) to assess sustainability metrics. Summarize findings in a report or infographic and present them to campus leadership with recommendations. This data can inform future green infrastructure efforts.
6. Planetary Health Podcast or Radio Segment	Record short episodes with local or student experts.	Free\Low-cost	Create a micro-podcast or video series where students, faculty, clinicians, or local activists share short (3–5 minute) reflections on topics like heat exposure, food systems, or sustainable medicine. You can use a smartphone and free editing apps (e.g., Audacity, CapCut). Publish on YouTube, campus pages, or social media.
7. Planetary Health Hackathon	24–48hr innovation challenge on health-environment solutions (e.g., air quality apps, eco-friendly health kits).	(Needs funding or university support)	Organize a campus-wide or virtual hackathon where interdisciplinary teams design health-environment solutions, apps, products, policy pitches, or campaign plans. Provide a theme (e.g., "Clean Air," "Green Health Facilities") and mentorship from faculty or NGOs. Consider judging panels and small prizes.
8. Climate Check-Ups (Booth)	A pop-up station offering personalized tips on reducing environmental footprints and managing health.	Free\Low-cost	Set up a mobile or table-based station during campus events or market days where people can receive personalized tips on reducing their environmental footprint and protecting their health. Use interactive quizzes, footprint calculators, hydration checks during hot weather, and handouts on low-carbon diets or pollution protection. Ideal for engaging students, workers, or the public in a fun and educational way.