

## First Meeting of the Health workforce Information Reference Group 10-12 March 2010, Montreux, Switzerland

### BACKGROUND

Reliable data and evidence are required by countries and stakeholders to make informed decisions concerning human resources for health (HRH) policy and programme planning, management, monitoring and evaluation. Despite a prevailing view that statistics on the health workforce are scarce, diverse sources can potentially be used to produce relevant information even in low-income countries, such as population censuses and surveys, health facility assessments and routine administrative records (e.g. staffing records, payroll records, professional licensing registries, records of health professions training institutions, work permits). The development of a comprehensive evidence base generally requires combining different types of information, frequently scattered across different sources.

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Some of the priorities and challenges identified for improving health workforce information at the global, regional and national levels include:

- building capacity among national health ministries and other stakeholders in collection, processing, analysis, synthesis and use of HRH data and statistics to inform decision making processes;
- optimizing dissemination and use of multiple data sources for HRH monitoring and analysis;
- standardization of definitions and classifications used in data collection, processing and dissemination for enhancing comparability across countries and over time, including use of international standard classifications relevant to health workforce statistics.

Against a backdrop of increasing demand for quality data and information on human resources for health, combined with an increasingly crowded landscape of partners and initiatives with purpose to improve health and strengthen health systems in low- and middle-income countries, an underlying challenge in each of these areas is optimizing use of available resources (human, financial and technical) and reducing overlap.

In order to promote a coordinated, harmonized and standardized approach to strengthening the global evidence base on human resources for health, the WHO Department of Human Resources for Health, Global Health Workforce Alliance and Health Metrics Network jointly called for the establishment of a **Health workforce Information Reference Group (HIRG)**. The role of the HIRG would be to provide technical advice towards a global strategy for strengthening health workforce information and monitoring systems in countries and regions. It would be composed of a small group of subject matters experts from a range of countries, institutions and agencies.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the global strategy is to improve the availability, quality and use of data on human resources in health systems to inform country health sector reviews and planning processes, monitor progress towards national and international health and health systems development targets, and ultimately improve population health outcomes.

The **core objectives** of the HIRG are to provide technical advice towards the development and implementation of this global strategy in terms of:

- promoting standardized approaches to monitoring health workforce development;
- coordinating and harmonizing efforts to building institutional and individual capacities for collection, analysis, presentation, sharing and use of HRH data and statistics;
- mobilizing technical and financial support for strengthening health workforce information and monitoring systems, with a focus on low- and middle-income countries.

The **specific objectives** of the first HIRG meeting are to:

- Review the current **strategies and methods** at regional and country levels for enhancing availability and quality of data on human resources for health;
- Learn and benefit from **country experiences** in good practices related to health workforce information systems;
- Propose feasible and innovative **strategies and methods** to support the implementation of workforce information systems activities at national and sub-national levels;
- Present suggestions on how to **monitor and evaluate** the implementation of workforce information activities proposed at country level;
- Identify key **stakeholders** at country, regional and international levels and define their potential role for scaling up recommended activities;
- Design an **action plan** for the HIRG reference group for the next year, including clear benchmarks for gauging the progress of proposed activities.

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

1. **Draft report** of the first HIRG meeting, including technical recommendations for a global strategy for improving country health workforce information and monitoring systems;
2. **Draft action plan** of work for the HIRG Reference Group for the next year;
3. **Terms of reference** of the HIRG endorsed by the members.

## REFERENCES

### Key technical documents:

*Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluation of Human Resources for Health, with special applications for low- and middle-income countries*, edited by Dal Poz MR et al. Geneva, World Health Organization, World Bank and United States Agency for International Development, 2009 (<http://www.who.int/hrh/resources/handbook/en/index.html>).

*Framework and Standards for Country Health Information Systems, second edition*. Geneva, Health Metrics Network and World Health Organization, 2008 (<http://www.who.int/healthmetrics/documents/framework/en/index.html>).

*The World Health Report 2006: working together for health*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2006 (<http://www.who.int/whr/2006/en/>).

### Key advocacy documents:

*Call to Action: Global Health Information Forum 2010* (<http://www.pmaconference.org>).

"Meeting the demand for results and accountability: a call for action on health data from eight global health agencies" by Chan M et al. *PLoS Medicine* 2010, 7(1) (<http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000223>).

*Kampala Declaration and Agenda for Global Action*. Geneva, Global Health Workforce Alliance and World Health Organization, 2008 (<http://www.who.int/workforcealliance/knowledge/publications/alliance/en/index.html>).

## MEETING AGENDA

Hotel Eden Palace au Lac, Montreux, Switzerland

<b>Day 1: Wednesday 10 March 2010</b>		
<b>SESSION 1</b>		
<b>Welcome and introductions</b>		
<b>13.30-15.00</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Opening and welcome</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Welcoming remarks from the WHO Department of Human Resources for Health, Health Metrics Network and Global Health Workforce Alliance</li> <li>→ Objectives and expected outputs of the meeting</li> <li>→ Self-introductions of the meeting participants</li> <li>→ Role of the facilitator</li> <li>→ Meeting logistics and other announcements</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Manuel Dayrit, Sally Stansfield, Mubashar Sheikh</p> <p>Mario Dal Poz</p> <p>All</p> <p>Vicki Doyle</p> <p>Linda Hegarty</p>
<b>15.00-15.15</b>	<b>Tea/coffee break</b>	
<b>SESSION 2</b>		
<b>Building a comprehensive health workforce information system</b>		
<b>15.15-16.00</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Overview presentation:</b> "Identifying and combining potential data sources of a comprehensive health workforce information system"</li> <li>▪ <b>Country case studies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ "Human resources for health monitoring and evaluation framework in Malawi"</li> <li>→ "Brazil health workforce education and management information systems"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Neeru Gupta</p> <p>Chris Moyo</p> <p>Sabado Girardi</p>
<b>16.00-17.15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Working groups on potential data sources:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ routine administrative sources</li> <li>→ health facility assessments</li> <li>→ population-based and other sources</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	All
<b>17.15-18.00</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentations from the working groups</li> </ul>	Rapporteurs of the working groups
<b>18.00</b>	<b>Close of Day 1</b>	

**Day 2: Thursday 11 March 2010**

**SESSION 3**

**Strengthening health workforce information systems: learning from experience**

<b>09.00-09.10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Brief summary of conclusions/recommendations from the previous day's working groups and discussions</li> </ul>	Vicki Doyle
<b>09.10-09.45</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Overview presentation:</b> "Opportunities and challenges for strengthening country health workforce information systems"</li> <li>▪ <b>Country case studies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ "Challenges in developing an HRH information system in South Africa"</li> <li>→ "Kenya nursing workforce database: achievements and challenges"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Christoph Bunge / Akunda Pallangyo  Verona Mathews  Chris Rakuom
<b>09.45-10.30</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Working groups on challenges for information systems strengthening:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ governance and leadership</li> <li>→ building human resources capacity (skills and competencies)</li> <li>→ building technical capacity (information and communication technologies)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	All
<b>10.30-10.45</b>	<b>Tea/coffee break</b>	
<b>10.45-11.15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentations from the working groups</li> </ul>	Rapporteurs of the working groups
<b>11.15-12.15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Presentation:</b> "Opportunities and challenges for monitoring trends in international migration of health personnel"</li> <li>▪ <b>Round table discussion:</b> Strengthening the availability and use of data and information on international migration of health personnel</li> </ul>	Pascal Zurn  All
<b>12.15-13.30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	

<b>SESSION 4</b>		
<b>Stakeholder engagement in health workforce information systems strengthening</b>		
<b>13.30-13.45</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Presentation:</b> "Establishing a leadership group of key stakeholders in health workforce information"</li> </ul>	Dykki Settle
<b>13.45-14.30</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Working groups:</b> Mapping of stakeholders and definition of their role (current and potential) at national and international levels</li> </ul>	All
<b>14.30-15.00</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentations from the working groups</li> </ul>	Rapporteurs of the working groups
<b>15.00-15.15</b>	<b>Tea/coffee break</b>	
<b>SESSION 5</b>		
<b>The role of the Health workforce Information Reference Group</b>		
<b>15.15-15.45</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Presentations of the proposed <b>Terms of Reference, Community of Practice</b>, and outline of the <b>Report of the First Meeting</b> for the HIRG</li> </ul>	Mario Dal Poz / Neeru Gupta
<b>15.45-17.45</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Open discussion: Defining the role of the HIRG</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ potential activities that can be coordinated at the international / regional levels</li> <li>→ potential activities that can be coordinated / implemented at country level</li> <li>→ linking the work of the HIRG with the work of other international initiatives, partnerships and networks</li> <li>→ mechanisms for coordination and communication among HIRG members and broader stakeholder communities</li> <li>→ overcoming potential challenges / managing expectations for the HIRG</li> <li>→ consensus on the Terms of Reference for the HIRG</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	All
<b>17.45</b>	<b>Close of Day 2</b>	

<b>Day 3: Friday 12 March 2010</b>		
<b>SESSION 6</b>		
<b>Working together</b>		
<b>08.30-08.40</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Brief summary of conclusions / recommendations from the previous day's working groups and discussions</li> </ul>	Vicki Doyle
<b>08.40-10.15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Open discussion: Development of an action plan</b></li> <li>→ development of an action plan of work for the HIRG for 2010 (and beyond?)</li> <li>→ expected products / results</li> <li>→ defining indicators / benchmarks to monitor the progress of HIRG activities</li> </ul>	All
<b>10.15-10.30</b>	<b>Tea/coffee break</b>	
<b>10.30-12.15</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Open discussion: Group commitments</b></li> <li>→ institutional framework for activities to be carried out by the HIRG</li> <li>→ mobilization of financial resources</li> <li>→ human resource commitments: "who will be responsible for what and when?"</li> </ul>	All
<b>12.15-13.30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	
<b>13.30-15.00</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Open discussion: Group commitments (continued)</b></li> </ul>	All
<b>15.00-15.15</b>	<b>Tea/coffee break</b>	
<b>15.15-16.00</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Closing</b></li> <li>→ evaluation of the meeting</li> <li>→ closing remarks from the meeting organizers</li> </ul>	Mario Dal Poz / Sonia Diaz Monsalve / Christoph Bunge
<b>16.00</b>	<b>Close of Day 3 and the Meeting</b>	

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