

AFRICAN UNION MINISTERS OF HEALTH



CALL FOR COMMITMENT ON HEALTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Global Health Workforce Alliance Advocacy Working Group welcomes the priority that the African Union is placing on resolving the crisis in human resources for health. To help ensure that necessary financing is available, that strengthened human resources for health lead to better health outcomes, and that health workers are health leaders, we urge the African Union Ministers of Health to commit to the following:

1. HRH Financing: 15% Commitment & Macroeconomic Policies

* Establish country-level timelines through a transparent and participatory process for meeting the 15% Abuja target in a timeframe consistent with the rapid and significant spending increases required to achieve universal access to essential health services.

* Proactively engage with Ministries of Finance and call upon Ministers of Finance to ensure that fiscal and monetary policies are based on analysis of health and other development needs, and thus are consistent with spending needed to achieve universal access, MDGs, and other obligations, including by ensuring that these policies do not lead to freezes on hiring health workers and teachers.

2. Governance, Stewardship, and Partnership: Linking Human Resources for Health Planning to Health Sector Planning & Human Rights Education

* Develop costed health sector plans that are aimed at achieving MDGs, Universal Access, and other goals, and that incorporate and are linked to costed human resources for health strategies.

* In partnership with civil society, establish publicly accessible and transparent benchmarks and mechanisms to track progress on AU health commitments, including on human resources for health, health system strengthening, and equity, and support inclusion of these benchmarks and tracking mechanisms in the African Peer Review Mechanism.

* Incorporate human rights education into health professional pre-service curricula.



Health systems capable of delivering on Universal Access and other commitments will require international partnerships. The 2007 G8 Summit is a critical opportunity to promote that partnership. A strong message from the African Union Ministers of Health to the G8 can help shape the Summit's priorities and outcomes.

We therefore encourage you to communicate the following message to the G8, as a collection of ministers and through your ambassadors to G8 countries and other channels:

We respectfully urge the G8 to:

- Commit to the goal, which we share, of ensuring that all people, including marginalized populations, have equitable access to a skilled, motivated, and equipped health workforce with decent wages and good working conditions, and to work with partners to develop ambitious yet achievable timelines and benchmarks towards achieving this goal.
- Complement our own resources by committing to sustainably support developing countries with the full financial and technical resources necessary to ensure development and implementation of costed health sector development plans that include as a priority comprehensive and costed HRH plans and that are aimed at meeting or exceeding the MDGs and achieving Universal Access.
- Commit to ensuring that fiscal and monetary policies are in place to enable countries to implement these health sector plans and to achieve or exceed the MDGs, including by supporting an immediate revision to policies that have led to hiring freezes on health workers and teachers.
- Harmonize disease initiatives with national health systems and health sector strategic plans, and ensure that these initiatives invest in health systems and help build national health management and administrative capacity.
- Engage with us in developing a comprehensive strategy to address health worker migration, including by reducing reliance on our health workers by adopting policies to develop self-sustainable health workforces to meet your own health workforce needs while following ethical recruitment practices.