

HEALTH WORKFORCE ADVOCACY INITIATIVE

Introduction to HWAI

The Health

Workforce Advocacy Initiative (HWAI) is a civil society-led network affiliated with the Global Health Workforce Alliance. HWAI engages in evidence-based advocacy with the goal of enabling everyone to access skilled, motivated, and supported health workers who are part of well-functioning health systems. Towards this end, we have launched a Campaign on Sustained and Adequate Health Workforce Financing to mobilize the considerable new resources required from wealthy countries and developing country governments, as well as to ensure that macroeconomic policies are consistent with health and other development financing needs. Along with our focus on adequate funding for health workforce and related health system strengthening, we promote the development of human rights-based health workforce strategies that are designed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, universal access to HIV/AIDS treatment, prevention, care, and support by 2010, and other health goals and obligations. And we seek to empower health workers themselves to become advocates. We work primarily through issue-focused teams that are open to anyone to join, and are building a broader network of civil society, health workers, and anyone else interested in international health workforce advocacy. A steering committee oversees and guides HWAI's activities.

We look forward to your becoming involved in HWAI's advocacy efforts. Please read on to find out more about HWAI and ways in which you can get involved.

HWAI Network

We invite you to join the HWAI network, an e-mail listserv for international health workforce advocacy. The HWAI network is open to anyone who would like to be involved in advocacy for the resources and policies needed to strengthen the health workforce and the accompanying health systems so as to enable countries to achieve the health-related Millennium Development Goals, Universal Access to AIDS treatment, prevention, care, and support by 2010, and other health goals and obligations.

This network is an on-going forum for strategizing, generating and sharing ideas and information, supporting advocacy efforts in the North and South – and helping to link different efforts – and what-ever will support you in your advocacy.

Network

participants have the opportunity to contribute to the newly launched Campaign for Sustained and Adequate Health Workforce Financing. We hope that this network can become a significant source of information to provide the evidence base needed for an effective campaign, as well as for ideas, solidarity and advocacy power, perspectives, and other support needed for a successful campaign.

We are working to build this network into an extensive, global community that is open to all – from any sector or institution – who believe that they can contribute to and benefit from the network, the forum for a social movement dedicated to strengthening the health workforce, the systems on which health workers depend, and ultimately – and primarily – the people who will live or die, who will heal or who will suffer, depending on the strength of the health system and the health workforce. Please join.

To join, please email your name, e-mail address, affiliation, and country to Sharonann Lynch at hwainetwork@healthworkforce.info, who administers the [HCW] listserv, the virtual home of the HWAI network. Please cc Eric Friedman (efriedman@phrusa.org).

Teams and Future Work

To more effectively reach our goals, along with the HWAI network, HWAI operates through several teams, including:

- International Health Partnership (IHP): *Works to ensure that all IHP+ countries develop comprehensive, costed health workforce plans, have sufficient funding to fully implement these plans and achieve health goals including the MDGs, and adhere to human rights principles including by fully engaging civil society and health workers and by ensuring health services for marginalized populations.*
- Global Fund: *Encourages countries to submit proposals to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria that include ambitious, technically sound components on health workforce and health system strengthening.*
- White paper on HRH financing and aid architecture: *Developing white paper and other material to call attention to major gaps in health workforce financing and in how health aid infrastructure is addressing health workforce financing needs.*

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Other teams focus on increasing developing country financing for health workforce and health system strengthening, on addressing macroeconomic policies that result in limited investments in health and the health workforce, on empowering health workers to become effective health and health workforce advocates, and on developing and sharing principles to which national health workforce strategies should adhere.

If you are interested in joining a specific team, please contact Eric Friedman (efriedman@phrusa.org).

Accomplishments

Our accomplishments and activities thus far have included:

- Developing advocacy toolkit for health professionals to engage in health workforce advocacy (http://www.healthworkforce.info/advocacy/HWAI_advocacy_toolkit.pdf).
- Trainings at the First Global Forum on Human Resources for Health (Kampala, Uganda, March 2008) for health workers and other participants on human rights, advocacy, and macroeconomic policies.
- Advocacy for a strong Global Fund role in health system strengthening, contributing to improvements in how the Global Fund now addresses health system strengthening.
- Creating and disseminating our Guiding Principles for National Health Workforce Strategies (http://www.healthworkforce.info/advocacy/HWAI_Principles.pdf).
- Health workforce advocacy at 2007 and 2008 G8 summits, including helping to spearhead civil society advocacy on health workforce for the 2008 summit.

HWAI's Strategic Vision

We engage in evidence-based advocacy to advance local, regional, and global efforts to enable all people, at the soonest feasible time, to have equitable and sustained access to a skilled, motivated, and well-equipped, informed, and managed health workforce who have decent wages and good working conditions, and are integrated into well-functioning health systems. The health workforce should be in the numbers, skills mix, and distribution with the management and leadership needed to achieve universal access to essential health interventions, the Millennium Development Goals, and to achieve and sustain universal access to comprehensive HIV treatment, prevention, care, and support by 2010.

We operate with the firm conviction that everyone has the right to the highest attainable standard of health and that an effective health workforce is central to fulfilling this right. The right to health places a solemn responsibility upon governments to make the maximum effort to meet all their people's health needs, including those of marginalized populations. We also believe in the need to empower frontline health workers and civil society to engage as active participants in all aspects of national, regional, and global discussions on the health workforce, and to work in partnership with governments and other institutions to realize the right to health.

HWAI's Goals

A) Secure at key global, regional, and national forums and processes specific commitments to prioritize human resources for health (HRH) and related health systems strengthening (HSS), policies and actions supportive of well-trained, motivated, adequately equipped and supported, and equitably distributed health workforces,

B) Secure adequate, predictable, and sustainable funding for HRH and related HSS and removal of restraints to spending expanded resources;

C) Build better accountability among all HRH stakeholders, especially governments, on meeting HRH-related commitments and obligations, including for HRH and related health financing, and;

D) Support the development and effectiveness of grassroots movements supporting HRH, especially in developing countries, and link national movements to regional and international networks.

Steering Committee

Action Group for Health, Human Rights and HIV/AIDS (AGHA) (Uganda)

ActionAid International

Africa Public Health Rights Alliance

African Council for Sustainable Health Development (ACOSHED)

African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF)

Asia-Pacific Action Alliance on Human Resources for Health

Global AIDS Alliance (USA)

Health GAP (USA)

Health Rights Advocacy Forum (HERAF) (Kenya)

International AIDS Society

International Council of Nurses

Oxfam

Physicians for Human Rights (USA) (chair)

Public Services International