Background and justification

Adopted in September 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 3c aims to ‘substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries’. In particular, SDG 3c includes a specific indicator (3.c.1) on ‘Health workforce density and distribution’.

The World Health Assembly adopted in May 2016 a resolution (WHA69.19) urging all Member States: (i) “to strengthen the data, evidence and knowledge” on health workforce; (ii) “progressively implement the National Health Workforce Accounts (NHWA)” and; (iii) “report annually to the Global Health Observatory”. The NHWA would allow relevant national stakeholders to create a harmonized, integrated approach for annual and timely collection of health workforce information, improve the information architecture and interoperability, and define core indicators in support of strategic workforce planning and global monitoring. The NHWA is based on the Health labour market (HLM) framework for UHC that takes a comprehensive approach to health labour market dynamics and contributes to the four main groups of health workforce policies – (i) production; (ii) inflows and outflows; (iii) distribution and inefficiencies; (iv) regulation of the private sector.

The UN High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth (ComHEEG) established by the United Nations Secretary-General in March 2016 recommends to ‘undertake robust research and analysis of health labour markets, using harmonized metrics and methodologies, to strengthen evidence, accountability and action’ with emphasis on Universal Health Coverage and the 2030 SDG agenda. The ComHEEG also recommended the establishment of an inter-agency data platform on health labour market.

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted in December 2016, the resolution A/RES/71/159 that recalls the WHA resolution 69.19 and invites ‘international, regional, national and local partners and stakeholders from the health sector and beyond to engage in and support the implementation of the Global Strategy on Human resources for Health, and achieve its milestones for 2020 and 2030’.

The above key frameworks and resolutions set out an ambitious and transformative agenda for change and position health workforce at the top of this agenda. They also call for and support the establishment and/or strengthening of robust HWF information systems through the NHWA and other data collection and exchange mechanisms in order to monitor the implementation of the agenda, in particular, the UHC, the SDG 3c and the key GSHRH milestones.

Purpose and governance

In support of the GHWN’s vision, aims and objectives, the Data and Evidence Hub is established and conceptualised to function as an overarching exchange and coordination mechanism that brings together various stakeholders, networks and expertise to coordinate and enhance the work for adoption, implementation and reporting on NHWA,
linking with the Health Data Collaborative (HDC) and to promote the intersectoral reporting on SDG 3c, particularly in low and middle income countries.

In addition, building on WHO’s own work and role at global, regional and national level, it would add value to support the work of the hub by pursuing other objectives for coordination, quality improvement and use of sound HWF data and evidence to support development of policies and plans.

Bringing together the key actors would allow addressing the observed fragmentation of data and the multiplicity of uncoordinated initiatives on HWF evidence. It would also allow the monitor more closely the implementation of the HWF transformative agenda.

The Hub will position itself as an advisory technical working group reporting to WHO and as a leader that facilitates knowledge generation and management for decision making at the regional and global levels. The proposed initial list of key partners and networks as well as the governance mechanism are presented below. This initial list is composed of various organizations, networks and mechanisms of different thematic and geographic scope and focus. This list will be expanded by invitation to other relevant stakeholders based on mutually agreed terms of reference. WHO staff will maintain a coordination, facilitation and oversight role.

Objectives

- To promote alignment and scale up country adoption and reporting on the NHWA;
- To promote intersectoral reporting on SDG 3c with relevant stakeholders;
- To strengthen the collaboration and coordination between various organisations and networks;
To promote the dissemination and use of sound evidence for decision making.
To serve as a platform for information exchange on NHWA and HWF data and evidence.

**Anticipated activities and products for 2017-2018**

In line with the adoption of the GSHRH, the GHWN Data and Evidence Hub will:

- Generate knowledge products to support the provision of up to date information on the HWF situation at global, regional and national levels;
- Develop tools and guidelines to promote international standards to improve data quality and use;
- Promote and support adoption, implementation and reporting on NHWA in at least 60 countries;
- Support intersectoral and joint monitoring of UHC, SDGs and GSHRH implementation;
- Support joint implementation of the HDC work-plan.