The Global Health Workforce Alliance

Report of the 16th Board Meeting

at Hotel Atlante Plaza, Recife, Brazil

Thursday, 14 November 2013

The document presents the Report of the Sixteenth Board Meeting and includes all decision points and, is subject to electronic ratification by the Board of the Global Health Workforce Alliance.
PARTICIPANTS

Attendance:
Dr Mitsuhiro Ushio (Chair), Dr Marie-Paule Kieny, Dr Timothy Evans, Professor Eric Buch,
Dr Ariel Pablos-Méndez, Dr Estelle E. Quain, Ms Frances Day-Stirk, Dr Francisco E. de Campos,
Dr Fernando Menezes, Ms Mathilde de Calan, Dr Junhua Zhang, Professor Miriam K. Were,
Dr Agnes Soucat, Dr Feng Zhao, Dr David Weakliam and Dr Haruna Lule.

Observers:
Dr Yousuke Takasaki – Ministry of Health, Japan, Dr Marianne Monclair – NORAD/Norway,
Dr Neil Squires – DfID/UK, Dr Ruediger Krech (WHO), Dr Mozart Sales – Ministry of Health, Brazil,
Mrs Maria Alice - Ministry of Health, Brazil, Mrs Juliana Vallini - Ministry of Health, Brazil,
Mr Leandro Viegas - Ministry of Health, Brazil

Apologies:
Dr Bjarne Garden, Mr Emmanuel Lebrun-Damiens, Dr Li Guoqin, Professor Ernest Aryeetey,
Dr George Shakarishvili, Ms Susan Chandler, Professor Srinath Reddy and Dr Otmar Kloiber.

Secretariat: Dr Marie-Paule Kieny, Ms Romana Rauf, Dr Giorgio Cometto, Mr Shinjiro Nozaki
Opening Remarks, Adoption of Agenda & Appointment of Rapporteur

The EXD a.i. warmly welcomed the Board Members, Alternate Board Members and the Observers to the Board meeting, and handed over to the Chair, Dr Mitsuhiro Ushio.

The Chair, Dr Ushio, introduced himself, informing that while he was a newcomer to HRH, he nevertheless expressed his and Japan’s continued commitment to the Global Health Workforce Alliance in pursuit of its mandate. The Chair thanked the Board members for their support of Japan’s nomination of him in this position, and for the very informative preparatory meetings that he had the opportunity of with several Board members while in Recife.

The Chair, speaking on behalf of the Board, expressed his sincere appreciation to the Brazilian Government for hosting the 3rd Global Forum on HRH in Recife, convened by GHWA with the able support of its other patrons WHO (HQ & PAHO) and contributions from key stakeholders.

BM16/2013/DP01: The Board adopted the agenda and appointed Dr Estelle Quain as the rapporteur.

Agenda item 1: Composition of the GHWA Board, Closed Session
Agenda item 3: Report by the Secretariat

The Board took note that the WHO Director-General had accepted the GHWA Board’s proposal to appoint a single person to lead the GHWA Secretariat and the new Health Workforce (HWF) Department in WHO. Given the critical nature of this post, the WHO Director-General also approved the use of an executive search company (Egon Zender International) to assist with the outreach. Two GHWA Board Members will take part in the selection process. The Board was further advised that the final selection would be taken by the DG, who should be given an option of the two strongest shortlisted candidates recommended by the selection panel. The selection process is anticipated to be completed in early 2014, and the new Director anticipated to be on board around Q2, 2014.
The Board deferred its discussion on budget and secretariat and agreed to revert to this agenda item after their discussion of agenda 8 (future of GHWA), agenda 6 (Workplan) and agenda 5 (Financial Update), in order to ensure better informed decisions that are fully aligned both with the expected resource envelope and with the clarity of the respective mandates of GHWA and WHO-HRH (HWF).

**Agenda item 8: Looking Ahead: Options to 2016, External Evaluation, Fourth Global Forum**

The Board started discussing the Alliance’s strategic direction to 2016 and the need to articulate a broader HRH vision beyond 2016.

The Board agreed that this was a critical juncture period, and an opportunity to reset the agenda, driven by evidence and research which GHWA was well placed to broker. The Board had consensus on the need for the Alliance to foster agreement on a global HRH vision and strategy for HRH for the next 15-20 years, capitalizing on its member resources. This strategic framework, while broader in scope, would have to identify GHWA’s role, building on its role of advocacy based on evidence, the promotion of cross sectoral action, and tracking of progress through an accountability mechanism.

The Board reiterated that GHWA should serve as an information hub providing a platform for networking and facilitation for a global community of practice on HRH, engaging in areas such as coordination of different countries and agencies, promotion of alignment by different constituencies, identification of global public goods required for the HRH agenda, and identification of different HRH models suitable for countries at different levels of socio-economic development. GHWA should attain these objectives by mobilizing its members and partners, and the secretariat is not expected to execute such activities directly, nor should it attempt to provide direct technical support to countries.

The Board recognized the need for reenergizing the HRH movement and had consensus that the Alliance (GHWA) Board should play a convening role in this process to draft the framework for strategic priorities for HRH for the next 15-20 years (above and beyond the GHWA Strategy 2013-16), with clarity on the specific areas of engagement that the GHWA secretariat should undertake, clearly distinguished from that of its members and partners, and that of WHO as its host organization, while engaging the GHWA membership and mobilizing it to its full potential.

The Board was clear that, while WHO should maintain its position as a key strategic partner, GHWA’s accountability is to its wider membership. GHWA should connect, monitor and facilitate synergies among its partners and mobilize them to deliver on their respective HRH commitments.

In this context, the Board decided to appoint a working group comprising, inter alia, the World Bank, AfDB, USAID, ICM, China, UK (DFID), WHO, Brazil and NORAD (the last to be confirmed by its Board member). Two co-chairs, to be agreed subsequently among the Working Group membership, should be tasked to lead this work. The Board additionally requested that the Working Group circulates a draft outline for the proposed strategic framework electronically to the Board for comments before PMAC (Jan 2014), and sets up discussions during the PMAC conference in Bangkok for those in
attendance, with a view to identifying a suitable process for the development of the HRH strategic
framework. The Board requested the Secretariat to nominate a focal person (Giorgio Cometto) to
support this Board-appointed Working Group.

The Board discussed that it might be opportune to plan for an independent evaluation of the Alliance
just prior to, and in preparation for, its ten year anniversary, in order to review options for post-2016.
The Board decided to defer further discussions and decision on this subject to a subsequent meeting
later in 2014, after having had the time to review the proposed strategic HRH framework and after
the appointment of the incoming Executive Director.

The Board equally deferred the discussion on whether to plan for a fourth Global Forum on human
resources for health just prior to reaching its tenth anniversary, pending new developments during
the course of 2014, to be discussed further at its summer meeting.

**DECISIONS RESULTING:**

**BM16/2013/8/DP06:** The Board appointed a Working Group comprised of representation from
World Bank, AfDB, USAID, ICM, China, UK (DFID), WHO, Brazil and NORAD (NORAD to be confirmed
by its Board member; other members welcome) to develop a draft HRH Strategic Framework for the
next 15-20 years, and propose a potential role of GHWA within that strategy.

**BM16/2013/8/DP07:** The Board requested that the Working Group share electronically the draft
outline for Board comments prior to and in anticipation of further discussions during the PMAC
meeting.

**Agenda item 6: GHWA Secretariat Workplan 2014-15**

The Secretariat presented the outline of its 2014-15 Secretariat Workplan, requesting for the Board’s
guidance on the budget target and review of its proposed deliverables based on its clarified mandate.
EXD a.i. alerted the Board on the administrative urgency of having an approved workplan for the
Secretariat at the beginning of 2014.

The Board provided guidance that, while the three main proposed areas of work were appropriate,
the workplan should provide greater clarity on expected deliverables, as well as on proposed cost
structure and expected income. The Board also discussed the need for an interim workplan, given
the fact that the incoming Executive Director was not yet in place, while ensuring that the Forum
follow-up activities and all earmarked activities for which funding is secured can be implemented
without delay.

The Board debated and subsequently tasked the Secretariat to develop a revised detailed 2014
interim workplan, with costed activities and salaries, with guidance that provisions for some
adjustment of non-earmarked activity budgets should be factored therein for adjustment, if needed
during the second half of the year, by the incoming Executive Director. The one year 2014
workplan should be clearly build on the synthesis and follow up of the Forum’s outputs.
(including eliciting new HRH commitments and initiating a process to track the commitments developed in the lead-up to the Conference, mainstreaming HRH messaging emerging from the Forum in global advocacy and policy dialogue processes and events), as well as include all the earmarked specified activities for the full 2014 year.

DECISION RESULTING:

**BM16/2013/6/DP08:** The Board tasked the Secretariat to revise a detailed costed 2014 Workplan, in accordance to the Board’s guidance provided at its 16th meeting, to be presented to the Board for electronic approval. This to be entered in the WHO system with provisions for some adjustment of non-earmarked activity budgets should be factored therein for adjustment, if needed during the second half of the year, by the incoming Executive Director.

**Agenda item 5: Financial Update and Future prospects for GHWA**

The Secretariat presented the 2013 financial statement with an anticipated deficit of $25,000 for 2013, which is significantly reduced as compared to the previous projected funding gap. The Secretariat advised that, while this funding gap would without doubt be filled with Forum income in process of receipt before 2013 year end, there were concerns on the limited financial resources secured to date for 2014 and beyond, much of which was still pending confirmation through signed agreements which were further reliant on the different donor cycles.

WHO reminded the Board of the Organization’s requirements to ensure staff salary funding commitments for a minimum period of 6 month in advance, which was not yet in place for the GHWA Secretariat for 2014.

The Board noted the various GHWA donors discussions, and expressed its confidence to be able to secure the required resources collectively between current donors for 2014 and beyond to 2016, reinforcing their confidence for the need of, and value for the work of the Alliance (GHWA) Secretariat to 2016. The Board discussed and agreed that the time was ripe to craft positive messages on GHWA moving forward to 2016.

The Board made note of their collective expectation of mobilizing funding for GHWA as follows: Core (flexible) funding anticipated, pledged and reliant upon five main contributors:
- Ireland’s multi-year commitment, announced at the Forum, pledged for Euro 500,000 per annum for 3 years to 2016;
- DFID (UK)’s proposed contribution, pending final approval, of £500,000 per annum for 3 years to 2016;
- Japan’s intention to continue similar level support annually to 2016 (subject to parliamentary approval);
- NORAD (Norway)’s endeavor to secure funding support anticipated between $500,00-700,000 per annum (subject to parliamentary approval) for 3 years to 2016; and
- Brazil’s pledge to contribute $350,000 per annum for 3 years to 2016.
The Board was advised that the above core funding to GHWA (ranging from $3 m up to $4 m US per annum, net of PSC, depending on the final negotiated amount) would be supplemented by earmarked (specified) project funding of which the following projects were in final negotiation stages. The European Commission’s 3 year project funding for Euro 2 million and NORAD’s reprogramming of its NOK 2.5 m (approx. $407,000 equivalent) for follow-up of Forum outputs. US Aid specified funding of $250,000 was also under negotiations. While the Board noted that France’s specified Muskoka project (for Euro 7770,000 per annum) had mostly shifted from GHWA to the WHO-HRH team since October 2013, as part of the clarified roles and responsibilities, the advocacy component would be retained by the GHWA Secretariat for implementation.

The Board made note of the projected income, which was at different stages of negotiation, and reliant on the respective donor approval protocols, and yet to be secured through signed agreements. The Board tasked the Secretariat to follow-up with donors, while in parallel urging the Board members (representing the donors) to secure their 16th meeting financial pledges at the earliest.

**DECISIONS RESULTING:**

**BM16/2013/5/DP09:** The Board took note of the funding pledges to GHWA for the period 2014 through to 2016, for both flexible and/or earmarked funding under approval consideration, dependent on the different donor cycles.

**BM16/2013/5/DP10:** The Board tasked the Secretariat to submit a new version of its financial statement, using the template proposed by the AfDB Board member, clearly separating the mandates and corresponding funding allocations to the GHWA Secretariat and it’s WHO Host Agency, respectively.

The Board then reverted to Agenda item 3: **Report by the Secretariat**

On the basis of the above anticipated indicative income, the Board reached consensus that, of the scenarios presented to the Board, option 1 - to close the GHWA Secretariat in 2014 - was rejected. The Board further considered that option 3 - to further reduce the size of the Secretariat - was not viable at this stage and was therefore rejected. The Board therefore chose option 2, which plans to keep the current Secretariat staff number, to ensure the viability of the existing structure and to sustain the momentum to deliver on the Alliance’s mandate through to 2016.

The Board further asked the EXD a.i. to give to the GHWA Secretariat staff longer contract extensions (1 year and 6 months, for fixed and short term contracts, respectively), in accordance with prevailing WHO practices. The Board requested in addition that the job descriptions of GHWA staff be aligned to its clarified mandate and corresponding workplan activities for 2014.
DECISSIONS RESULTING (Agenda 3):

**BM16/2013/3/DP11**: The Board approved its Standing Committee Report of the 21 October 2013, with the added clarity to maintain the size of its Secretariat (Option 2) in anticipation of the confirmation of the pledges made during the 3rd Global Forum and at its 16th Board meeting (agenda item 5 elaborates).

**BM16/2013/3/DP12**: The Board requested that staff be given longer contracts (6 months or 1 year) and approved for the Executive Director (a.i.) to align the functions of the Secretariat staff and to reconcile (match) them to GHWA’s clarified role and mandate. Noting that this may entail necessary adjustment to the ToR/description of select position(s).

**Agenda item 7: Third Global Forum on HRH Feedback**

The Board noted the recap of the previous day’s (13 November) GHWA Members feedback following the 3rd Global Forum on Human Resources for Health in Recife, which reinforced the need to sustain the Alliance and its Secretariat without loss of the momentum. The Board acknowledged the high quality technical content of the programme’s side meetings, and the momentum demonstrated in the plenaries and commitment tracks.

The Brazilian Government informed the Board of their satisfaction that the Forum had met and exceeded their expectations. The Board was informed that over 1700 participants collected badges, while an additional 300 Brazilians attended the conference’s opening session with representation from over eighty Member State including high level Ministers and Deputy Ministers.

The Board acknowledged and commended its Secretariat who had delivered the 3rd Global Forum on HRH in very difficult circumstances.

On the lessons learned discussion of the conference which the Board requested the Secretariat to document more comprehensively following the Forum, it was clearly noted that the private sector and several other constituencies, beyond the health sector, had not been visible nor balanced among the various panelist. The Board further recommended that the absence of sufficient mid or lower level health worker audience, beyond the physicians who had indeed dominated this Forum, be addressed for future such events.

**DECISSIONS RESULTING:**

**BM16/2013/7/DP13**: The Board approved that the presentations of the Third Global Forum on Human Resources for Health conference sessions be posted on its website, as well as the output documents, the Recife Political Declaration on HRH, the seventy plus (Member State and other organizations) Commitments and the GHWA Members’ Letter.

**BM16/2013/7/DP14**: The Board requested that the Third Global Forum on HRH official report be published and posted on its website once available.
BM16/2013/7/DP15: The Board noted the absence of sufficient representation of mid or lower level health worker audience, and/or other stakeholder presence beyond the physicians who had indeed dominated this Forum, as a lesson learned for inclusion of wider constitutional representation in future Alliance events.

**Agenda item 9: Board Self-Assessment**

BM16/2013/9/DP16: The Board tasked the Secretariat to send out the Board’s Self-Assessment electronically with additional space for written comments by 22 November 2013.

**Agenda item 4: Governance Handbook Update**

The Board was informed of the revisions required to the handbook to accommodate the Board decisions taken since its issue in 2010. The Board was furthermore informed of WHO’s current review of its hosted partnership arrangements, which might also have implications for the governance handbook.

The Board recommended that the Governance Handbook updates be reviewed early next year by two representatives of the Board (AfDB and WHO). The two Board members would need to work with the Secretariat and present their recommendations to the SC on changes to be made to the Handbook. These recommendations would also need to be shared electronically with the full Board for comments and inputs. The Board further decided that minor changes could be approved by the SC (pending comments and inputs by the Board electronically) and that any substantive change should be approved by full Board at its next meeting, following recommendation by the SC.

**DECISIONS RESULTING:**

BM16/2013/4/DP17: The Board appointed the AfDB and WHO members to work with the Secretariat to draft the required revisions to the Governance Handbook, and requested the Standing Committee to review and share their recommended draft electronically with the Board for comments, if any. The Board agreed for any substantive issues or edits to be presented to the Board as an agenda topic at its next Board meeting (anticipated in July 2014).

**Agenda item 11: Closing Remarks**

The Chair requested the Board to agree on a tentative date and venue for its next meeting. Professor Miriam Were informed the Board that this was to be her last Board meeting as she would be stepping down from the Board. The Board thanked Professor Were warmly for her loyal services to the Board and to the Alliance.
DECISIONS RESULTING:

**BM16/2013/11/DP18**: The Board approved its next meeting to be held in the first half of July 2014 in Geneva.

The Chair thanked all the participants and closed the meeting.