Global Health Workforce Network

Terms of reference for HRH leadership thematic hub

May 2017

Background

The WHO Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030\(^1\) (the “Global Strategy”) recognizes a continuing need for a transnational agenda on human resources for health. This can be achieved by fostering effective coordination, alignment and accountability through a network of international human resources for health (HRH) stakeholders and actors. Building on the experience and achievements of the Global Health Workforce Alliance over its 10 years of existence (2006–2016), WHO has agreed, at the request of Member States, to support at all levels of the Organization the establishment of a global network for HRH collaboration.

The specific objectives of the Global Health Workforce Network (GHWN)\(^2\) are:

1. To inform high-level political engagement, intersectoral and multilateral policy dialogue in support of the implementation of the WHO Global Strategy on HRH at global, regional and country levels.

2. To provide a forum, in relation to the implementation of the WHO Global Strategy, for multi-sector and multi-stakeholder agenda setting, sharing of best practices, and harmonization and alignment of international support to HRH.

3. To foster global monitoring and mutual accountability on international HRH goals, targets and commitments, effectively linked with United Nations system processes and mechanisms for monitoring of UHC and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and operating in close coherence with existing multilateral human rights frameworks and institutions.

Rationale for an HRH leadership hub

The achievement of the policy options and strategic objective within the Global Strategy, which are a requirement for the attainment of Universal Health Coverage and the health targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, requires a coherent, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach to HRH governance. The Global Strategy identifies as one of its four strategic objectives “To build the capacity of institutions at sub-national, national, regional and global levels for effective public policy stewardship, leadership and governance of actions on human resources for health.” Among the responsibilities envisaged for WHO, the Global Strategy includes the “development of an internationally recognized, postgraduate professional programme on HRH policy and planning, with international mentoring and a professional network to support the implementation of workforce science.”

---

\(^1\) [http://www.who.int/hrh/resources/globstrathrh-2030/en/](http://www.who.int/hrh/resources/globstrathrh-2030/en/)

\(^2\) [http://www.who.int/hrh/network/en/](http://www.who.int/hrh/network/en/)
A mapping commissioned by WHO of existing HRH leadership and management training programmes has revealed a multitude of initiatives. The analysis of their contents and teaching modalities suggests there are opportunities to further strengthen and harmonize the theoretical grounding of HRH courses, their contents and the teaching modalities they adopt, and orient them more explicitly towards country needs, in alignment with the new policy directions proposed in the Global Strategy.

**Objectives**

The objective of the HRH leadership hub is to facilitate the development of a state of the art post-graduate leadership programme on HRH awarding an accredited certificate/diploma/master’s degree. To this end, WHO will collaborate with relevant academic institutions and partners with a view to have the course(s) administered by one or more higher education participating institutions on the basis of a syllabus approved by WHO. The programme will be targeted on a priority basis to planners and policy makers in low- and middle-income countries and decision-makers in UN agencies and international partners, and will aim at equipping them with the skills to identify needs, analyse trends and drivers in national health labour markets, and develop, implement and monitor relevant health workforce strategies and policies.

**Activities for 2017-18**

Priority activities for the 2017-18 biennium include:

1) the development of a core standard syllabus aligned to Member States’ need and to the policy directions of the Global Strategy;
2) the uptake of this core syllabus by leading academic institutions and WHO Collaborating Centers;
3) matching the supply of courses offered with demand by HRH planners, managers and practitioners and other relevant target groups in Member States.

**Governance and modus operandi**

Like other GHWN thematic hubs, the HRH leadership hub is established by WHO on a temporary basis as an advisory technical working group reporting to WHO. WHO develops the initial draft and approves the TORs of all thematic hubs, and monitors compliance with such TORs. WHO invites existing agencies to support the hubs on the basis of mutually agreed terms of reference. In the case of the HRH leadership hub in particular, this will include a call for expressions of interest from institutions with a relevant capacity to contribute to the development of an HRH leadership and governance syllabus, and to offer an accredited HRH leadership course.

The HRH leadership hub members will not be remunerated for their participation in the hub activities and will be requested to complete a declaration of interest, in compliance with relevant WHO policies, including the Framework for Engagement with Non-State Actors. The primary mode of interaction for the thematic hub is expected to be by e-mail and teleconferences, with possible face-to-face meetings organized as the need may arise and resources permitting, but always striving for cost-effectiveness.