Brief Report of Meetings held with National Human Resource Committee and the South African Medical Association – October 2015

As part of the Brain-Drain Brain-Gain project, the African Institute continues to engage with several key stakeholders in the health workforce field. The following is a brief record of the meeting held with the National Human Resource Committee (NHRC) of the Ministry of Health. The meeting was held on Thursday 22nd October 2015.

The African Institute was invited to make a presentation and discuss the results of the study on the minimum data sets which was conducted during year 1 of the project. Also present at the meeting were representatives from provincial Departments of Health and representatives of the national Department of Social Development. The following were key recommendations / decisions of the meeting:

1. The NHRC will review with a view to improve the content and utilisation of the exit interviews which are conducted when employees leave the public health service.
2. The National Department of Health will initiate a process of enhancement of the current government-wide human resource data management system. The purpose will be to accommodate the planning needs of the health sector i.e. health workforce planning.
3. The NHRC will look at other aspects that impact on health workforce migration e.g. ensuring the existence of a female-friendly work environment.
4. The African Institute, through its engagements with other critical stakeholders, is to assist in a process that will culminate in the development tools for measuring migration trends/patterns.
5. The African Institute will continue to engage with NHRC towards development of tools or capacity building relevant to health workforce matters.

Another meeting was with the South African Medical Association (SAMA). SAMA is largest voluntary organisation of medically qualified professionals. The membership categories range from junior doctors to specialist societies. It also has members who reside in other countries.
besides South Africa. The focus of this meeting was on the year 2 aspect of the Brain-Drain Brain-Gain project i.e. medical practitioners since SAMA’s membership is biggest in this category. The meeting concluded as follows:

1. SAMA will provide the necessary details relating to the data fields they record when registering members.
2. SAMA is willing to partner with the African Institute in conducting a survey among medical practitioners. Use will be made of SAMA’s systems to reach out to the medical profession.
3. The African Institute will share the results of the study with SAMA.
4. SAMA will participate in future engagements with all other stakeholders in the quest to improve the quality of data management systems of the South African health workforce.

As expressed earlier, the African Institute engagement with these and other bodies is ongoing as we seek to arrive at a situation where South Africa is in a position to regularly produce national health workforce accounts.