Burkina Faso: Integrating the Implementation of HRH Commitments with the National Health Plan

Burkina Faso has made significant progress in the implementation of the HRH commitments made at the Third Global Forum on Human Resources for Health in November 2013. Their commitments included: to increase the number of health workers to ensure maternal, newborn, and child health (MNCH) services; to improve the capacity and quality of training of their health professionals; to improve the distribution of health workers in rural areas, especially poor areas with the greatest maternal and child health needs; and to improve MNCH service quality.

After convening two meetings to discuss the implementation and fulfilment of their HRH commitments, the Ministry of Public Service recruited 200 State nurses graduates, 150 midwives, 200 auxiliary midwives and 150 registered nurses. In January 2014 these newly hired health personnel were deployed to posts in underserved areas. Midwives were specifically assigned to remote regions to improve accessibility to quality RMNCH services. The Human Resources Department, in collaboration with the thematic committees of the National Health Development Plan, were charged with monitoring and following up on the commitment implementation process. In addition, a monitoring system has been set up to track progress on the ground and report back to the Ministry of Health.

The steps which have been taken so far by Burkina Faso represent just the beginning of their plans, which also include advocacy with the Ministry of Public Service and Finance and Budget to plan future recruitment, and cooperation with the National School of Public Health to improve health worker capacity. They also plan to revise the curriculum, train and recruit 100 midwives each year for ten years beginning from 2015; these midwives will be deployed to the areas with greatest unmet needs, and additionally recruit doctors and nurses for two of the poorest, most rural regions (Sahel and East). Scholarships will be offered to gynaecologists and paediatricians and to establish a mechanism to monitor the quality of education in both public and private schools.

In keeping with their commitment to focus on improving the quality of MNCH services, Burkina Faso has planned to continuous professional development opportunities for health workers throughout their careers, quarterly inspections to monitor the quality of care and adherence to ethical codes of conduct.

As Burkina Faso has developed their National Health Development Plan (2011-2020) they have integrated the implementation of their HRH Commitments with the health plan, thus aligning their future goals with the HRH pledges they made.