

# Human Resources Management

## How can we strengthen the systems health workers need to function effectively?

Human resources management (HRM) focuses on people—how they fit within a health system; how they are hired, trained, paid, and supported; and how they can be most productive. However, in many countries facing severe health workforce challenges, HRM systems and weaknesses are often overlooked. Additionally, the fragmentation of HRM functions and responsibilities among different stakeholders and government entities highlights the need for more coordinated and integrated approaches to strengthen HRM. Further, policy-makers and leaders need accurate and timely HR data to inform planning and decision-making and provide a foundation for negotiating financial and other resources to strengthen HRM.

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## What does this mean?

- Weak HRM systems, policies, and practices hinder countries' ability to plan, produce, deploy, manage, train, support, and retain their health workforce, undermining efforts to improve health.
- Global investments to increase the number of trained health workers and the quality of health services will be difficult to support and sustain without more focused attention on strengthening HRM systems and functions.



## What can be done?

- Develop HR professional leadership for planning and managing the health workforce at all levels of the health system.
- Strengthen HR information systems to collect, analyze, and use data for decision-making.
- Streamline recruitment, deployment, and payroll functions.
- Implement work climate improvement strategies to increase health worker job satisfaction, productivity, and quality of care.
- Provide tools for HR managers to seek input on health worker attraction and retention to inform strategies and policies that will motivate workers to stay on the job.
- Support the design and development of appropriate mHealth applications to support health worker performance and productivity.
- Identify barriers to effective HRM related to gender discrimination.



## Key considerations

- Improving how health workers are managed is key to strengthening the services they deliver, and therefore central to health sector reform. HRM is not just about recruitment, personnel data, supervision, or staff training. These functions need to be planned within the broader HRM system.



- A broader systemic approach to HRM should include:
  - Investing the organization/country with the authority to control the number and type of people it employs
  - Developing a cadre of professional HR managers
  - Allowing the organization/country to set or influence its salary policy
  - Creating the authority or resources to alter the work environment and design internal rules to manage the workforce effectively.
- HRM initiatives should engage key stakeholders in the assessment and analysis process to promote ownership, commitment, outcomes, and proposed interventions that are responsive to local needs.

## CapacityPlus resources

- The **HRM Rapid Assessment Tool** assists policy-makers, managers, and HR practitioners to address underlying HRM issues and challenges facing the health system. The tool is adaptable to specific contexts, allowing the user to select appropriate HRM policy, strategy, and capacity interventions.
- The **HRH Action Framework** assists governments and managers to develop and implement strategies to achieve an effective and sustainable health workforce. The HRM Rapid Assessment Tool is designed to work with the Framework's action fields (HR Management Systems, Leadership, Partnership, Finance, Education, and Policy).
- Stakeholder Leadership Guidelines** provide a practical set of actions that human resources for health leaders at the country level can take to successfully launch and sustain stakeholder leadership groups.
- The **Rapid Discrete Choice Experiment Tool** is used to assess health worker attraction and retention in rural areas.
- The **iHRIS Suite** includes free, Open Source software that can be downloaded and customized for local needs:
  - iHRIS Qualify** tracks health worker training, certification, and licensure
  - iHRIS Manage** maintains personnel deployment, performance, and attrition information
  - iHRIS Plan** models long-term health workforce needs
  - iHRIS Retain** costs retention strategies to be implemented at the district, regional, or national level.
- The **HRH Global Resource Center** offers HRM-related research, best practices, and country-based examples to support evidence-based decision-making.

### CapacityPlus IntraHealth International, Inc.

1776 I Street, NW, Suite 650  
Washington, DC 20006  
T +1.202.407.9425

6340 Quadrangle Drive  
Suite 200  
Chapel Hill, NC 27517  
T +1.919.313.9100

info@capacityplus.org  
www.capacityplus.org

### The CapacityPlus Partnership



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