

Concept Note

Regional Workshop Development of Human Resources for Health Information Systems (HRHIS)

Purpose:

To address structuring issues for the development and strengthening of the HRHIS at the national level and their integration at the regional and global level

Objectives:

- Define a methodology for mapping health occupations in the region.
- Identify actors involved in the development of the HRHIS.
- Validate a methodology for the evaluation of HRHIS maturity.
- Discuss National Health Workforce Accounts (NHWA) updates at the regional and global levels.
- Outline the concept and steps of a Health Labor Market Analysis (HLMA).
- Introduce the use of NHWA to inform HLMA in Latin America and the Caribbean.

HRHIS are fundamental for managing human resources for health and supporting the implementation of policies based on information and evidence. However, the availability of an integrated HRHIS that efficiently manages HRH information from the moment health professionals begin their training, obtain their license, and are employed until they leave the health workforce is lacking in several countries of the region. The absence of timely, accurate, and relevant information for managing HRH limits understanding of the health workforce's size, composition, qualifications, and distribution at the national and sub-national levels and does not allow effective planning. When an HRHIS is available, national health authorities can anticipate various problems, such as an insufficient supply of health workers for the health system's needs, understand the mobility patterns of these resources due to retirement, death, or emigration, and plan their workforce efficiently.

The ever-increasing availability of data in the health sector has created fragmented records and data sources. As a correlate, PAHO technical areas monitor the health situation in the region, the commitments assumed by the Member States, and the progress of specific programs through focal points at the ministries of health that are not always communicated or obtain their data from the same sources. The fragmentation of the organization reinforces the fragmentation in the countries. Greater internal articulation with the NHWA platform would improve programmatic actions in the countries and promote similar practices.

The work being carried out by the Human Resources for Health Unit makes it possible to identify critical points for technical cooperation, to support countries with the development of their information systems, and with the commitments acquired at the regional and global levels.

Identifying the maturity conditions of each one of the systems will help guide cooperation actions at the country level. On the other hand, in an intersectoral and fragmented field such as the HRH, data is the property of different government actors in the educational, health, labor, and finance sectors and the public and private sector, social security, and professional associations in each country. A broad vision regarding this map of actors will facilitate the identification of strategies to form alliances that favor information sharing.

A Health Labor Market Analysis (HLMA) becomes necessary to improve data analysis and effectively plan the region's health workforce. It can identify trends and provide a comprehensive understanding of the key factors influencing the supply and demand of health workers, improving forecast and planning for the health worker needs of the future and guiding short-term strategies to address immediate issues. Therefore, when initiating an HLMA in a country, it is necessary first to assess the implementation of NHWA. Depending on the situation, it may be advised to strengthen the implementation of NHWA in the country, using the network of stakeholders involved.

At the global level, given the requirements of the National Health Workforce Account, in particular, the categorization of health professions has been a challenge with the available International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO). The countries' diverse professions, denominations, and regulations require a particular study in the region, allowing for better understanding and comparability.

The experiences of the region's countries allow for identifying good practices on these issues and enrich the vision and options for developing and improving HRH information systems. For this reason, it is timely and necessary to hold subregional workshops that promote the construction of a community of practice and identify cooperation actions at the country level.

The HRHIS team of the HSS/HR Unit needs to consolidate its work agenda for closing this biennium based on the initiatives arising from the new lines of work and the proposals arising from the exchange with the countries.