



Fifth Global Forum on Human Resources for Health 3–5 April 2023

Protect. Invest. Together. 

Protecting, safeguarding, and investing
in the health and care workforce

Civil society action brief

**Leveraging intersectoral
governance to improve
education, employment
and retention of health
and care workers**



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About the action brief

This action brief is led and co-developed by civil society organizations (CSOs) and wider networks to frame discussions of the advocacy agenda at the World Health Organization (WHO) Fifth Global Forum on Human Resources for Health, 3-5 April 2023. This brief highlights key actions and a collective agenda on the value of intersectoral governance to strengthen education and employment for health and care workers at national, regional and the global level. The actions outlined below will also inform future policy dialogues such as the World Health Assembly and the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meetings on Universal Health Coverage and Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response in September 2023.

Intersectoral governance of the health and care workforce agenda refers to enabling coordination and actions across several sectors. Important arms of governance include transparency, accountability and participation – (*adapted WHO & EU Observatory Policy Brief 53, 2023*).

Value of intersectoral governance for civil society organizations

HRH challenges are multifaceted and require collaboration and coordination across multiple sectors, including government, academia, the private sector, community groups and health and care workers. Education and employment policies and regulations are shaped by decision-makers and actors across various sectors. The value of intersectoral governance is that it is an important mechanism to strengthen the health and care workforce, the specific value for civil society organizations is to advocate for education and employment issues. This includes:

- Coordinated and aligned structures support implementation of strategies, financing and implementation, with the added benefit of a clear entry point for civil society to lobby, collaborate and engage versus inefficiencies of having to engage different sectors (education, labour, health).
- The added value of multisectoral governance is a whole of society approach, bringing together vested stakeholders across multiple sectors to support education, employment and retention (e.g. digital sector, infrastructure development, health and care sectors). A whole of society approach extends to bringing together civil society organizations and networks across various sectors to work together, to advocate on issues such as the decent work agenda and the migration of health and care workers from low-and-middle income countries. Importantly, a whole of society approach has the potential to lead to national, regional and global level coordinated action and yield the benefits of pooled resources.



Civil society priority actions

Action Area 1	Action Area 2	Action Area 3
Strengthen transparency, coordination and information sharing across different levels of the health system and across sectors	Scale up the development and recognition of competencies of the health and care workforce in the education and employment sector moving towards harmonization	Drive advocacy and accountability for the decent work agenda
1.1. Strengthen and utilize routine and transparent HRH data for planning, implementation and reporting	2.1 Strengthen health and care worker education including training, continuous professional development and workplace learning	3.1 Capture, publish and utilize disaggregated data to address intersectional issues such as gender and youth.
1.2 Advocate for interoperability of HRH data and systems	2.2 Support better accreditation and regulatory processes in education and employment of health and care workers	3.2 Collaborate with multi-sectoral partners, government and parliamentarians on key HRH actions for the decent working agenda
1.3 Support coordination and information-sharing platforms across sectors	2.3 Facilitate multi-stakeholder partnerships for digital health and care worker education	3.3 Monitor progress on the implementation of the decent work agenda through collaborative efforts with key stakeholders e.g. professional associations

Action Area 1: Strengthen transparency, coordination and information sharing across different levels of the health system and across sectors

1.1 Strengthen and utilize routine and transparent quality HRH data e.g., ensuring health and care workforce shortages are considered in financing, planning and budgeting.

1.2 Advocate for robust national-level information systems on the workforce with interoperability across multiple sectors and systems (education, labour, finance, health).

1.3 Provide support to strengthen information sharing platforms (e.g., education, employment and migration data) between global, regional and country stakeholders and across multiple sectors at a national level.

Action Area 2: Scale-up the development and recognition of the competencies of the workforce in the education and employment sector moving towards harmonization

2.1 Strengthen education including training, continuous professional development and work environments to accelerate competency-based education and practice.

2.2 Support and partner with key stakeholders to implement competency-based education and employment standards through better accreditation and regulatory processes.

2.3 Facilitate multi-stakeholder partnerships, including public and private partnerships in education, health and technology sectors, to expand the utilization of digital education and learning technologies.

Action Area 3: Drive advocacy and accountability for the decent work agenda

3.1 Enable governments and partners to capture, publish and utilize disaggregated data to address intersectional issues such as gender and youth for a safe and decent work agenda.

3.2 Collaborate with multi-sectoral partners including governments and parliamentarians to drive implementation on the quality of working conditions in the health and care sector including fair remuneration, ethical working hours, safety, reporting mechanisms, mental support, and meaningful and equitable engagement in decision-making.

3.3 Monitor progress on the implementation of the decent work agenda through collaboration with professional associations and trade unions to drive a common agenda for better working conditions.

Mechanisms for action

To increase education, employment and retention of the health and care workforce, civil society organizations and networks are calling for support –

Advocacy programming and campaigns to address human resources for health and other economic, gender, technology, migration and education issues that have direct implications on the health and care workforce and to support multi-stakeholder mechanisms and better data.

Stronger partnerships between civil society organizations and networks across sectors, governments and the private sector to develop long term and structural solutions to challenges affecting the health and care workforce. Partnerships and collaboration leads to pooled resources and investments, joint advocacy and the power to connect stakeholders across sectors and at local, national , regional and global levels, working together to accelerate the pace of change.

Engagement – civil society must engage with various stakeholders such as governments, regional and global institutions and the private sector. Civil society offers important insights of constituencies such as communities, patients and health and care workers. These insights are important in guiding human resources for health priorities, policies and investments and in stimulating action in other sectors (e.g. the education sector to strengthen educational curricula and accreditation).

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