

REIMAGINING HEALTH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR AFRICA'S HEALTH SECURITY

A high-level side event in the margins of the 77th UN General Assembly

COMMUNIQUE

19th September 2022 - We, African Union Heads of State and Government, and Heads of Delegations participating at the Special Side Event, **“Reimagining Health Workforce Development for Africa's Health Security”** in the margins of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

PREAMBLE

MINDFUL that Africa, a continent of more than 1.3 billion people, continues to experience the highest incidence of public health emergencies annually.

DEEPLY CONCERNED by the detrimental impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic across Africa's health, security, social and economic sectors; **FURTHER CONCERNED** by the potential negative consequences of existing public health emergencies including the multi-country monkeypox outbreak; the persistent pandemics of HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria; maternal and infant mortality; non-communicable diseases; and impacts of climate change.

RECOGNIZING that Africa bears 25% of the global burden of disease and has only 3% of the world's health workforce.

RECALLING the commitment by African Union (AU) Member States to meet the Abuja Declaration target of allocating at least 15% of their annual budgets to the health sector.

NOTING the AU Heads of State and Government Declaration, EX.CL/1026 (XXXI) of 2017 on Accelerating the Implementation of International Health Regulations in Africa.

FURTHER NOTING the critical shortage of health workforce in Africa projected to reach about **6.1 million by 2030**, and which is made worse by the numerous public health emergencies.

RECALLING the AU Assembly decision, **Assembly/AU/Dec.649 (XXIX)** of 2017, that urged the AU Commission, together with UNAIDS, WHO and other partners to rapidly recruit, train and deploy two million Community Health Workers equitably across the continent.

FURTHER RECALLING the AU Assembly Decision, **Assembly/AU/Dec.4(XXXV)** of 2022 that called on AU Member States to accelerate investment in health workforce development and mandated Africa CDC to champion this continental drive.

WELCOMING the progress made by Africa CDC in increasing the quality and quantity of African public health professionals through the delivery of tailored capacity building initiatives.

WE, the Heads of State and Government hereby call for further investment in health workforce and a new compact for health workforce development in Africa, that include:

1. **Redefining and building a fit-for-purpose health workforce**
 - *Call upon the AU through the Africa CDC, to establish the health workforce task team to implement a compact for health workforce development in Africa as per the Assembly decision.*
 - *Call upon AU Member States to mobilize all sectors such as health, veterinary, labor, education and finance to strengthen health workers training, deployment and retention.*
 - *Call upon AU Member States to collaborate through compacting and agree on a set of evidence driven targets to promote harmonization and accountability.*
 - *Call upon AU Member States to ensure all health workforce are adequately remunerated, particularly community health workers.*

2. **Investing in the female health workforce**
 - *Call upon AU Member States to establish a framework for investment in women health workforce, to ensure systemic and institutional recognition for women's contributions and leadership.*

3. **Increasing domestic financing and private sector engagement**
 - *Call upon AU Member States and partners to increase domestic financing for a fit-for-purpose health workforce to ensure sustainability.*
 - *Call upon partners including bilaterals, multilaterals, and finance institutions to mobilise more resources for sustainable investment in health workforce in Africa.*
 - *Call upon AU Member States to provide an enabling ecosystem for collaboration with the private sector to leverage their technical and financial resources.*

4. **Transforming and strengthening monitoring, evaluation and learning for health workforce.**
 - *Call upon Africa CDC with support from partners to design, develop and facilitate adoption of a comprehensive metrics framework for health workforce in Africa.*
 - *Call upon AU Member States to document the socio-economic impact of investing in health workforce and progress towards the Agenda 2063.*

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