

Human Resources for Health

Context

Human resources are an essential element of a health system and an important organisational asset. Health care is labour intensive and the health sector is a major employer in many countries, with the cost of human resources accounting for a high proportion of national health budgets. It is therefore critical that appropriate systems and practices are in place to manage and develop health workers and to ensure that they contribute to sector performance and health outcomes. Unfortunately, many countries today are experiencing severe challenges with the recruitment, deployment, retention and motivation of healthcare staff, which is impacting on the overall performance of the sector. It is now recognised that many developing countries will not achieve the health Millennium Development Goals unless they focus more on human resources in the health sector

Research on HR topics at The Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM) have included staff performance management, migration, staff retention in rural areas and the interface between health and public sector reforms and the health workforce. A widely distributed and referenced product was a set of guidelines for appraising the HR situation developed for the EC. LSTM working together with LATH are developing technical briefs on workforce planning and strategic HR planning. There has been long-term collaboration with the World Health Organization, the Joint Learning Initiative and now the Global Health Workforce Alliance (GWhA). LATH has developed a web-based compendium of HR tools for health and are currently contributing to the web-based HR action framework that has been adopted by the GWhA. The School is represented on the Editorial Board of the BMC Human Resources for Health journal.

What We Offer

LATH and LSTM are fully committed to consolidating and strengthening its position as a leading global authority in the areas of HRH technical support, research and teaching, encompassing:

- National policy development
- Strategic and operational planning
- Workforce planning
- HRM&D systems & processes (recruitment, deployment and retention)
- Performance management systems
- Human resource financing
- Health sector reform & decentralisation
- HRH research
- HRH teaching & academic linkages
- Training and development systems and practices such as pre-service training, in-service training and continuing professional development
- HRH metrics and information systems
- Monitoring & evaluation
- Health worker migration
- Task shifting
- Health & public sector management and reform
- Executive and leadership Training
- Capacity building
- Organisational change & institutional development
- Project planning & management
- Health systems strengthening
- Quality Assurance

Selected Examples of Experience

HR Guidelines <p>On behalf of the European Commission Tim Martineau and Javier Martinez developed guidelines for the human resource planning and management component of the EC's Health Sector Appraisal Studies and produced a strategic document for the EC Health Experts Group highlighting the main issues affecting human resource planning and management (HRPM). The final document "Guidelines for Appraisal and Strategic Development" has been translated into a number of languages and been widely distributed by the EC.</p>
Global <p>LATH is a major partner on the \$250 million, USAID funded, global Capacity Project. This project addresses the problem caused by insufficient human capacity in the health sector in the developing world – for example insufficient numbers of health workers, staff with inadequate qualifications or experience, poor human resource planning and management. LATH has responsibility for Policy Level Human Capacity Development with a full time post of head of the 'Policy and Planning Team', who is responsible for developing the overall framework and action plan for policy improvements in human resource systems. The Policy and Planning Team focuses on the development of strategies and outcomes specific to policy analysis, advocacy and policy implementation and improved workforce planning, allocation and utilisation. Specific recent technical inputs have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• development of a HRM/D structure in Swaziland;• assistance to the Policy and Planning Unit of the Ministry of Health in Rwanda to develop a more strategic focus for their human resources plans and to assist with the first steps of implementation;• development of Innovative Approaches and Promising Practices Studies in Uganda and Malawi;• development of a compendium of HR guidelines and tools
Zambia <p>In 2005 Margaret Caffrey and Tim Martineau supported the Zambia Ministry of Health to finalise their Human Resources for Health Strategic Plan 2006-2011. In 2005 LATH was contracted to write a briefing paper on the HRH Strategic Plan 2006-2011 for submission to the President of Zambia. In 2006 LATH supported the Change Management process in the restructuring of the Zambia Ministry of Health In 2008 LATH participated in the Mid Term Review of the Zambia National Health Strategic Plan with particular focus on HRH</p>
Mozambique <p>In 2007 and 2008 LATH provided support to the development of human resource management reform and the development of a 7 year human resources for health plan for the Ministry of Health in Mozambique.</p>
Lesotho <p>In 2008 LATH supported the development of a Human Resources and Capacity Development Strategy for the Health Sector within the framework of the Lesotho Health and Social Welfare Medium Term Expenditure Framework.</p>
Malawi <p>LATH supplied three long term HRH Technical Assistants providing support to the Sector Wide Approach in Malawi. Particular achievements, they contributed to, include the development and financing of a HRH Strategic Plan, a Deployment Policy and an HRH M&E Framework.</p>
Kenya <p>In 2006 LATH and LSTM staff developed a HRH Strategic Plan to address the human resources crisis in Kenya. A comprehensive and balanced package of measures was required to address staff shortages, as well as maldistribution, skills imbalance, and a poor working</p>

environment for many healthcare staff. A working group was set up to develop the HR plan, and technical guidance provided while a detailed plan was developed. Strategies were prioritised and an implementation plan and a monitoring and evaluation framework were developed.

Namibia

In 2005 a LATH consultant carried out a study in Namibia of innovative initiatives and/or promising practices used by the government and MOH for managing the health workforce. This documented the approaches and incentives which countries have used to improve recruitment, deployment, retain, and motivate workers. The approaches have been shared with governments, donors, the World Bank and implementing partners working on finding ways to improve the management of the health workforce.

Eastern and Southern Africa

LATH provided HR expertise for the World Bank Human Resources for Health in Eastern and Southern Africa project. This involved carrying out assessments of the options and strategies proposed by governments to resolve existing constraints in human resources for health. Under this, LATH managed consultants in Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania with specific objectives to: assist with country review (Uganda and Zambia); conduct HR situation analysis for inclusion in Country Status Report (Uganda) or Analytic and Advisory Services reports (Zambia and Malawi); contribute HR component of WB proposal for Sector Wide Approach support (Malawi); analysis of HRH governance in the context of decentralisation (Tanzania).

Eritrea

In 2002, a LATH consultant reviewed the draft HRD policy of the Ministry of Health. From this review a comprehensive policy for Human Resources for Health was prepared, with strategies for implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The policy review included conducting needs assessments, examining staffing patterns, proposing in-service, refresher and upgrading courses for different categories of health workers, setting up a system of performance appraisal for health workers, and developing a career structure for different health workers.