



HR-HR - Human Resources for Health Research

A neglected area of Human Resources for Health? The debate on Human Resources for Health (HRH) is growing in importance in the international development community and is the theme of the WHO 2006 World Health Report. HRH has attracted much attention due to the large numbers of health care workers, medical staff and qualified doctors, trained in developing countries and hired to work in health care systems in the North America and Europe. The WHO's World Health Report and Global Health Watch – the alternative world health report produced by civil society organisations, with input from COHRED – both describe the problem and are starting to propose solutions to address it. **'HR-HR' – Human Resources for Health Research** In contrast to the attention focused on brain drain of health care workers, the area of human resources for health research is all but forgotten in the HRH picture. The need to focus attention on human resources needs for the health research sector (HR-HR) in low income countries was initiated by COHRED in 2004. It looks at the support countries need to build their health research systems. A close look at the situations faced by low-income countries reveals that the starting point for a well functioning national health research system is a skilled and motivated cadre of research professionals and research managers. And this must be supported by systems to develop, manage and motivate them. **'HR-HR' - Human Resources for Health Research: an African Perspective** is a regional initiative. It is jointly organised by COHRED, African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), EQUINET, African Council on Sustainable Health Development (ACOSHED), Global Forum for Health Research, African Health Research Forum, and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). The HR-HR Africa process aims to provide a holistic look at human resources needs in a health research context. Its meeting in Nairobi (2006) addressed important facets of human resources that are generally not considered. The initiative has convened multi-country teams to generate new thinking around four core themes:

- **General human resources issues.** The general human resources environment in Africa.
- **Communities influencing research agendas.** How communities can influence health research agendas at local and at national levels to focus on health priorities.
- **The power of networks.** How 'networking' can strengthen health research.
- **Communication and Knowledge Sharing.** What skills are needed in health research systems and organisations to optimize the use of research communication and knowledge sharing.