Expanding the Health Workforce to Alleviate the Disease Burden & Promote Wellness

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A looming shortage of 18 million skilled health workers in low- and middle-income countries stands between us and the promise of global UHC—and the economies it could help stimulate.
This is compounded with LIMCs having the highest global burden of disease, with sub-Saharan Africa alone accounting for 22%.
The disease burden is shifting. We need to respond and anticipate to this shift when training and planning for the health workforce.
To expand HRH, we need to invest in data, national health workforce strategies, health financing, & transformative education.

Source: “Five-year action plan for health employment & inclusive economic growth), WHO
Additional Strategies to Expand Access to HRH

- Put **primary and secondary education** within reach for more children to augment the future pool of health worker candidates.
- Reform **preservice education** and employ **task-sharing** to address disease burden.
- Focus on **primary health care**.
- **Optimize the mix of skills** within the health workforce.
Ghana is Investing in HRH on the Road to Achieve UHC

- Ghana health workforce is growing each year
- MOH deployed a community-based health planning & services (CHPS) policy to provide critical maternal and child health services
  - CHPS contribution to total family acceptors was over 25% in 2016
- Ghana is training community health nurses as midwifery assistants, immunization cold chain managers, & palliative care
- Ghana created a National Noncommunicable Diseases Policy and Strategy document
  - Training midwives on cervical cancer screening
Between 1990-2015, Ghana increased coverage of skilled birth attendance from 40% to 66%. Ghana is projected to achieve 91% coverage by 2030.

**Indicator 3.1.2:** Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (doctors, nurses, midwives, or country-specific medical staff).

**Target 3.1:** By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births.

**Goal 3:** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
Indicator 3.8.1 is much more difficult to reach than many of the other health-related SDG indicators. What will it take for us to accelerate progress?