

Pacific Human Resources for Health Alliance (PHRHA)
Annual Report of the Secretariat
30 November, 2009

1. Background

WHO with support from AusAID convened two face-to-face PHRHA Steering committee meetings in 2009. The objectives of the first meeting were to: i. Finalize Standard Operating Procedures for the SC; ii. Review work plan and agree on priorities for 2009 and 2010; iii. Review the framework and indicators for the PHRHA and iv. Progress the development of the PHRHA Funding Proposal for Pacific island countries. The meeting made a set of recommendations that included key actions that PHRHA should take, priorities for the interim secretariat to undertake, and for the interim secretariat to provide an update of the PHRHA activities to the 8th Pacific Ministers of Health meeting in Madang, PNG.

Human Resources for Health (HRH) and Pacific Human Resources for Health Alliance (PHRHA) was an agenda item at the 8th Pacific Ministers of Health meeting in Madang, Papua New Guinea. The meeting acknowledged the strong support from key partners, especially AusAID and NZAID for the Pacific Open Learning Health Net (POLHN) and the PHRHA.

The PHRHA through its workplan highlights the potential for meeting the unique needs of the region as well as the needs of individual Pacific island countries by coordinating actions through networking and multisectoral collaboration; advocacy; sharing information and resources to address HRH challenges.

The meeting made a set of recommendations that necessary actions be taken to implement the PHRHA workplan in particular:

- quality in health professional education with focus on nursing;
- country specific data sets for HRH planning;
- innovative continuing education including POLHN;
- recruitment and retention; and,
- primary health care practitioners.

The objectives of the second meeting were to: i. Review progress in the implementation of the alliance's workplan and identify issues and challenges faced, ii. Set targets and identify key activities to be achieved within specified timeframes in the areas recommended by the 8th meeting of ministers of health and iii. Technical working groups to discuss and come up with recommendations on specific aspects of the alliance's workplan. As a precursor to the mid term review of PHRHA, an external facilitator guided the Steering Committee through a review of the structure, functions and workplan of PHRHA. The session provided an opportunity to highlight areas for revisions

including where PHRHA and the Secretariat can be more strategic in addressing the workplan.

The conclusions and recommendations are attached as Annex 1.

2. PHRHA Progress

The PHRHA and its Secretariat has undertaken several key activities since its first meeting in July 2008 including the following:

a. Information and Data

UNSW was contracted to undertake a mapping exercise of health workforce in 15 countries. This was completed in early 2009 and has provided a snapshot the key HRH information and data.. The Secretariat has put this information onto a regional template to allow comparison across the Western Pacific region. The regional template has been circulated to countries to update and we have received the information from 5 countries to date.

b. Pacific Code of Practice

A review of the impact of the PCOP highlighted the following:

HR Data: The lack of accurate data and minimum data sets was seen as a hindrance in estimating disease burden and workforce planning. In addition, the lack of knowledge of the PCOP has prompted the idea to have a workshop for all the stakeholders.

Education and Training: Countries need to continue training of skilled Health Workers and special fellowship arrangements need to be made for allied health workers and post graduate upskilling. Twinning between source country professional associations and those in recipient countries-to develop locum arrangements and the sharing of human and other resources-would strengthen workforce capacity.

Research: The report suggests having a tracer study for nursing schools in the region and the Fiji School of Medicine graduates to look at the employment and migration patterns.

Policy, Advocacy and Information: Countries need to assess bonding arrangements and proper information like an 'information package' needs to be provided by recruiters to avoid exploitation of health workers in the Pacific.

c. Vacancy Board on DevZone

The Secretariat has been processing Health vacancies for the past three months for the Pacific Health Vacancy Board and responses have been encouraging. A total of 30 vacancies have been posted and verbal report from Fiji School of Medicine showed that they received a lot more applications from the region with the use of DevZone. The PHRHA secretariat will continue to market this service with Pacific Island countries.

d. Nursing Proposal

Funding was received for enhancing and standardising regional education programmes in nursing and midwifery. A call for expressions of interest was advertised in September, 2009. The selection of the party to carry out the work was scheduled to be done by the Technical Working Group on Nursing during the informal PHRHA workplan implementation meeting in November. The TWG recommended that the secretariat discuss with Auckland University of Technology and James Cook University the process for re-submitting a revised proposal based on the expanded Terms of Reference and key issues as identified by the TWG [budget, consultancy fees, mechanisms for the proposed Steering committee, more country led approach (bottom up approach), etc.] or putting together a joint proposal for the project: 'Enhancing the quality of nursing and midwifery educational programmes and services in the Pacific'. Preliminary review of the situation was conducted during country visits to Nauru, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu in 2009. The current NZAID supported Nursing project in Kiribati and Vanuatu has provided guidance and lessons learnt as we start the AusAID funded project as mentioned above.

e. PHRHA Newsletter and Website

The PHRHA Newsletter is published and emailed every quarter and sent to all the focal points and interested stakeholders. The main purpose of the newsletter is to share information of best human resources for health practices. Like the Pacific Health Vacancy Board, the newsletter readership has increased steadily from June to August to October. This portrays the growing interest and significance being placed on PHRHA in the region. In addition, the Pacific Human Resources for Health Alliance also has a website which can be located on the following location www.phrha.org. Apart from information sharing, linkage to useful resources and websites (GHWA, AAAH, Nursing Legislation and POLHN), the website also has a help desk function. This can help users to access personalized services through the secretariat as all queries will be attended by officers with high caliber.

3. Ongoing Activities of the PHRHA

Apart from the above, several activities have occurred concurrently and are on-going activities. These include:

a. Working with countries on workforce development:

The Secretariat continues to advocate for workforce development planning in countries during visits. The first step is strengthening the information and the data sets. We are working with the focal points for PHRHA in the country in increasing their capacity and understanding of HRH issues and to strengthen use of data e.g. role delineation, task shifting, relevant redistribution based on patient work loading and needs for in-service training, upskilling and continuing education. The involvement and orientation of other government ministries such as Planning, Public Service Commissions, Education and Finance on HRH issues will continue to ensure that they too are aware of retention, migration and incentive issues for HRH which may apply to other cadre of workers.

b. Partner Coordination, Collaboration and Linkages

The Secretariat has developed good relationships with the development partners and an informal round table meeting took place prior to the Steering Committee meeting to brief them on the progress of PHRHA. The partners present included AusAID, NZAID and JICA. Invitations will be extended to USAID when the next donor round table will be held in January, 2010. This is a good forum to share PHRHA progress, lessons learnt on the different development partner involvement in HRH in the region. PHRHA maintains linkages with PIHOA as well as AAAH and GHWA. We will also be working together with UNSW on retention studies in selected countries. The secretariat continues to collaborate and work closely with Fiji School of Medicine and the Nursing Schools in the region linking up on the training needs and competencies for the health workers in the Pacific. The secretariat is a member of the steering committee for the Pacific Eye Institute project and is linking up with regional HIV and NCD projects with their HRH planning.

c. HRH Advocacy

The PHRHA secretariat prepared a policy brief template which was shared at the Steering Committee meeting. The SC endorsed the template and that it should be shared with the countries with special emphasis on the use of relevant in-country data to support the brief. This will form the basis of advocacy with high level officials on HRH issues, being mindful that the countries are at different levels of understanding of HRH issues and implementation of the WHO regional HRH strategy. Work will continue to promote awareness and adoption of relevant resolutions concerning HR strategies and frameworks.

d. Pacific Open Learning Health Network

The demand for Pacific Open Learning Health Net (POLHN) courses and resources continues to grow. NZAID is currently funding most of the POLHN work and additional funding has been received from the Government of Japan. The NZAID project is moving along well and the training of tutors at Fiji School of Medicine (FSMed) and the National University of Samoa has resulted in between 15 and 20 additional courses available for the next year. FSMed is also expanding tutor training. During the coming months, additional funding to meet the demand for courses and access to resources will need to be obtained.

e. Technical Working Groups (TWG)

Technical working groups for the nursing project and specialised clinical services met during the PHRHA Steering Committee meeting in November. The Nursing TWG was reported above. The Specialised Clinical Services Group met and recommended that there is no need for a TWG convened under PHRHA at this moment and that the funds allocated by AusAID for this TWG be redirected towards convening a meeting of Clinical Directors and Service Providers to review progress on implementation of the programme outlined in the Design Document. The SC identified the need for a TWG on

continuing professional development and asked the secretariat to develop terms of reference and proposed membership in close consultation with Fiji School of Medicine.

5. Conclusion

Whilst a lot of work has been done, there is still a need to continue the work of the Alliance and the focus will be on:

- a. Gap analysis at the country level and prepare a draft toolkit for the Pacific island countries based on the AAAH Strategic Planning Guidelines.
- b. 'Enhancing the quality of nursing and midwifery educational programmes and services in the Pacific' project
- c. Ongoing activities of PHRHA
- d. Coordination, collaboration and Linkages of HRH activities

6. Attachments

A copy of the recommendations from the November Steering Committee meeting are included as Annex 1.

A copy of the expenditure against the planned costs is included as Annex 2.

A copy of the PHRHA workplan and budget for 2010 are included as Annex 3

Annex 1:

**PACIFIC HUMAN RESOURCES FOR HEALTH ALLIANCE (PHRHA)
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
3-6 November, 2009**

Draft Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

The objectives of the Steering Committee meeting are to:

1. review progress in the implementation of the alliance's workplan and identify issues and challenges faced;
2. set targets and identify key activities to be achieved within specified timeframes in the areas recommended by the 8th meeting of ministers of health; and
3. Technical working groups to discuss and come up with recommendations on specific aspects of the alliance's workplan.

Several key documents were reviewed, amended and endorsed by the Steering Committee. These included the:

- Standard Operating Procedures for the PHRHA and the Steering Committee
- PHRHA Workplan with several areas identified as high priority and to be implemented in 2009 - 2010.
- Terms of Reference of the proposal: 'Enhancing The Quality Of Nursing And Midwifery Educational Programmes And Services In The Pacific'
- Discussion Papers on:
 - Information and data
 - Policy Brief
 - Retention

The Steering Committee also noted the various HRH activities currently underway including the:

- POLHN and continuing education initiatives
- Nursing Project
- Vacancy Board for Pacific Health Workforce
- PHRHA newsletter and website
- Information and Data

As a precursor to the mid term review of PHRHA, an external facilitator guided the Steering Committee through a review of the structure, functions and workplan of PHRHA. The session provided an opportunity to highlight areas for revisions including where PHRHA and the Secretariat can be more strategic in addressing the workplan.

Technical Working Group (TWG) meetings took place which included the Nursing TWG and the TWG to look at Specialised Clinical Services. The Specialised Clinical Services group also discussed the formation of a Continuing Professional Development TWG.

The next meeting of the SC will be convened in January / February 2010 via Teleconference

Recommendations from the PHRHA Workplan review:

To the PHRHA Secretariat:

- Refocus and phase the PHRHA workplan in key strategic areas of action moving from advocacy to supporting countries to address the priority areas identified in March 2009 and endorsed by the Pacific Minister of Health (areas include quality in health professional education with focus on nursing; country specific data sets for HRH planning; innovative continuing education and POLHN; recruitment and retention; and, primary health care practitioners).
- Circulate the refocused and phased workplan for comment and agreement by the Steering Committee prior to dissemination to PHRHA focal points.

Recommendations from the Technical Working Group for Nurses project – Enhancing and standardizing regional education programmes in nursing and midwifery:

To the PHRHA Secretariat:

- Discuss with Auckland University of Technology and James Cook University process for re-submitting a revised proposal based on the expanded Terms of Reference and key issues as identified by the TWG [budget, consultancy fees, mechanisms for the proposed Steering committee, more country led approach (bottom up approach), etc.] or putting together a joint proposal for the project: 'Enhancing the quality of nursing and midwifery educational programmes and services in the Pacific'

Recommendations from the Technical Working Group on Specialised Clinical Services:

To the Donor Partners (AusAID and NZAID):

- Establish the Development and Coordination Team as outlined in the Design Document with the Fiji School of Medicine as the host partner for this regional initiative.

To the PHRHA Secretariat:

- Strengthen existing linkages, coordination and communication between organisations and professional bodies within the countries and in the region.
- Obtain agreement from AusAID to redirect funds allocated to the PHRHA for a Technical Working Group on Specialised Clinical Services in the Pacific towards convening a meeting of Clinical Directors and Service Providers to review progress on implementation of the programme outlined in the Design Document.

Recommendations from the Technical Working Group on Continuing Professional Development**To the PHRHA Secretariat:**

Establish a Technical Working Group on Continuing Education and Professional Development, in close collaboration with Fiji School of Medicine, to develop / propose a CPD framework and regional guidelines that countries can adapt / adopt drawing from current in-country experiences and existing models. This will include:

- a. Development of Terms of Reference for the TWG by 31 December 2009 for dissemination to the Steering Committee
- b. Proposal for membership of the TWG that includes representation from all key Health worker cadres
- c. Situational analysis of current CPD's conducted in the region e.g. by Fiji School of Medicine (Samoa, FCGP, PISA...)

Overall Recommendations**To the PHRHA Secretariat**

- Continue to work with the countries on the information and data on HRH including providing support in gap analysis at the country level and prepare a draft toolkit for the Pacific island countries based on the AAAH Strategic Planning Guidelines.
- Continue to work closely with the UNSW knowledge Hub on key HRH issues including retention in particular the mutuality of benefits.
- Circulate the record of the meeting to all Steering Committee members for clearance as per the Standard operating procedures for PHRHA.
- Prepare a financial report on the PHRHA financed and submit to the Steering Committee.
- Prepare and circulate the monitoring and evaluation framework based on the revised workplan

Annex 2.

Pacific Human Resources for Health (PHRHA) Workplan and Budget for 2009

	Proposed 2009 (In US\$)	Expenditure
Employ a Programme Manager (P-4, ICP country -based, International Staff) (50%) and a Program Assistant (SSA) to support Secretariat	90,000 35,000	\$60,000 \$12,000
Undertake country visits	20,000	\$15,000
Convene meetings of Steering Committee and country focal points	120,000	\$65,000
Convene and support the work of the Technical Working Groups	33,000	\$15,000
Provide support for HRH strategy development at country level	30,000	\$30,000
Total	US\$ 328,500	US\$ 197,000

NOTE: *Balance of USD 131,500 carried forward to 2010.
WHO Administrative fee of 13% not included*

Annex 3

AusAID is providing financial support to enable the work of PHRHA and the implementation of its work plan over the next four years (2008-11). The work plan for 2010 is as follows.

- **Salary and support costs for the PHRHA Programme Manager, Technical Officer Human Resources and Health Systems Research and Program Assistant (SSA).**

Estimated Funding required: US\$ 415,000

- **During 2010, WHO Secretariat will visit member countries in order to progress the objectives of PHRHA.** Activities expected to be included in these visits are;
 1. Convene multi-sectoral stakeholders meetings on HRH and advocate for the development of in-country coordination mechanisms that support oversight of current HRH initiatives and future directions in the context of a collaborative health systems approach.
 2. Conduct workshops and training on specific HRH areas as well as in support of the formulation and implementation of HRH strategic plans.
 3. Support introduction of HRH planning based on WPRO and AAAH guidelines in selected countries

Estimated Funding Required: US\$ 100,000

- **During 2010, WHO will convene meetings of the PHRHA focal points and the Steering Committee.**

Estimated Funding required: US\$ 120,000

- **During first half of 2010 WHO will convene the *Technical Working Group (TWG) on Continuing Professional Development*** as agreed at the Steering Committee meeting of November 2009
- The Nursing TWG to provide technical oversight of the nursing project on enhancing and standardising regional training programmes in nursing will meet via teleconference and during the PHRHA focal point meeting

Estimated Funding required: US\$ 40,000

- **During 2010 provide ongoing support for HRH strategy development at country level,** including situational analysis and review of workforce plans implementation in PIC in the Northern and Southern areas of the Pacific

Estimated Funding required: US\$ 50,000

- **During 2010, the Nursing project on enhancing and standardizing regional training programme on nursing and midwifery will start**

Estimated Funding required: US\$ 200,000

This is summarized in the table below:

Objectives	Expected outputs	Activities	Time frame				Total Cost
			1st Q	2nd Q	3rd Q	4th Q	
Facilitate effective HRH partnerships & coordinated approaches	PHRHA country focal points training plan prepared to include roles & responsibilities; how much time involved & expectations of PHRHA secretariat.	Generic training plan based on functions in workplan & experiences from Kiribati, Vanuatu & Solomon Islands prepared & agreed by Steering Committee for introduction in a further 3 countries					0
	Advocacy Communications Strategy	Visit to establish teams & costed workplans					15,000
	Policy briefs prepared & disseminated	Develop & disseminate communication strategy					0
	External / internal resources tracking & mapping	Ongoing by Secretariat					0
	Regular coordination meetings	Donor Roundtable meetings quarterly					0
		PHRHA Focal Point meeting					120,000
	Steering Committee Meeting linked to FP Mtg						0

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countries		provision and facilities (where relevant); professional conduct and ethics, etc;					
	Establish HRH information hub for Pacific island countries	Minimum dataset and country health workforce profiles established in at least 5 Pacific island countries	Continue to update and validate Mapping data				
		workforce profiles established in at least 5 Pacific island countries	Proposal for use of adapted planning guide (as above)				
			Proforma health planning tool, Capacity checklist used in 3 countries				
	Facilitate HRH capacity building, quality of training institutions and networking	Quality in nursing education & nursing services programme as per workplan	Refer to workplan for Nursing Initiative				
Sub total							200,000
ACTIVITY TOTAL							410,500

All activities identified in the workplan above are exclusive of Secretariat costs for the implementation of the activities. Total budget is exclusive of WHO Programme Support Costs 13%

Secretariat	Time frame				Total Cost
	1st Q	2nd Q	3rd Q	4th Q	
Technical Officer PHRHA					220,000
Technical Officer Human Resources and Health Systems Research					170,000
SSA Programme Assistant PHRHA					25,000
Travel and Support Costs					100,000
	<i>Sub total</i>				515,000
	TOTAL				925,500