



Photo: HWM Activity

Data-Driven Recruitment of Critical Human Resources for Health in Bauchi State

Background

Human Resources for Health (HRH) are essential for providing high-quality health care services and achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC). A human resources for health information system (HRIS) provides data to track the status of the workforce in terms of the number, occupation, and geographical distribution of health workers. The health workforce registry is a pivotal and essential component of a functional HRIS, as it provides important health worker statistics to aid planning and decision-making.

According to Nigeria's National HRH Strategic Plan (NHRHSP) 2021-2025, a weak HRIS is one of the critical challenges of effective health workforce planning and management. Nigeria's weak HRIS has resulted in the poor tracking of the health workforce in service, education, distribution, demand, capacity, and remuneration. Effective

health workforce tracking is essential for effective HRH planning, management, policy development and evidence-based decision-making.

These issues are exemplified in several States, including Bauchi in northeastern Nigeria. Despite the establishment of the National Health Workforce Registry (NHWR) and the subsequent upload of the Bauchi State HRH data into the NHWR in 2019, the State had not made any subsequent update to its State Health Workforce Registry (SHWR) until 2022. Factors stalling the update of the Bauchi SHWR included the paper-based data collection method and its associated high cost, as well as inadequate manpower, with the State Ministry of Health (SMOH) HRH Desk Officer solely responsible for updating the SHWR.



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Intervention

The USAID/Nigeria Health Workforce Management (HWM) Activity (2020-2025) supports the establishment of a cost-effective, well-trained, and motivated health workforce, particularly in targeted rural and remote areas of Bauchi, Ebonyi, Kebbi, and Sokoto States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The HWM Activity has supported the Bauchi State Government to:

1. **Adopt the National HRH Data Management Standard Operating Procedure (SOP):** HWM worked through the Bauchi State HRH Technical Working Group (TWG) to facilitate the formal adoption of the National HRH Data Management SOP (contained in the NHWR Handbook) and its dissemination to State stakeholders.
2. **Adopt an electronic tool for HRH data collection:** In 2022, HWM successfully supported the Bauchi State to pilot and adopt an electronic data collection tool for the update of the SHWR using KoboToolbox, a free and online suite of tools designed for field data collection. With its web and Android Open Data Kit (ODK), KoboToolbox is designed for the quick collection of reliable data that can be easily integrated into various data analysis software.
3. **Advocate for an increased pool and capacity building of HRH Managers:** HWM advocated for the appointment and capacity building of HRH focal persons drawn from each of Bauchi State's Local Government Areas (LGAs). HWM also conducted an experiential group-based learning training workshop for all HRH focal persons in the State and LGA health ministries, departments, and agencies.
4. **Use of State-specific protocol for SHWR update:** HWM supported the Bauchi State Government to

develop a protocol to guide the periodic update of its SHWR.

5. **Improve HRH data discourse by the State:** HWM provided technical assistance to the State HRH Managers to prepare and present the State's HRH data at the State's Health Data Consultative Committee (HDCC) and Health Data Governance Council (HDGC) meetings. At the State level, the HDCC represents the technical support entity within the health data governance structure while the HDGC provides leadership and general oversight for all health data-related issues.

Challenges

1. The Bauchi State Government did not provide funds for the SHWR update; therefore, HWM funded the exercise.
2. There are Infrequent HDCC and HDGC State meetings due to dependence on logistical support from donors.

Successes

1. Improved understanding among Bauchi State HRH officials of the National HRH Data Management SOP
2. Formal adoption and use of the National HRH Data Management SOP by the Bauchi State Government to guide SHWR operations and strengthen the HRH data collection and management processes in the State
3. Improved understanding by the State and LGA HRH Managers of their roles and responsibilities and improved confidence in the use of HRIS (SHWR and HRH data dashboards)
4. An established State-specific system for routine HRH data updates. The State now convenes a quarterly HRH

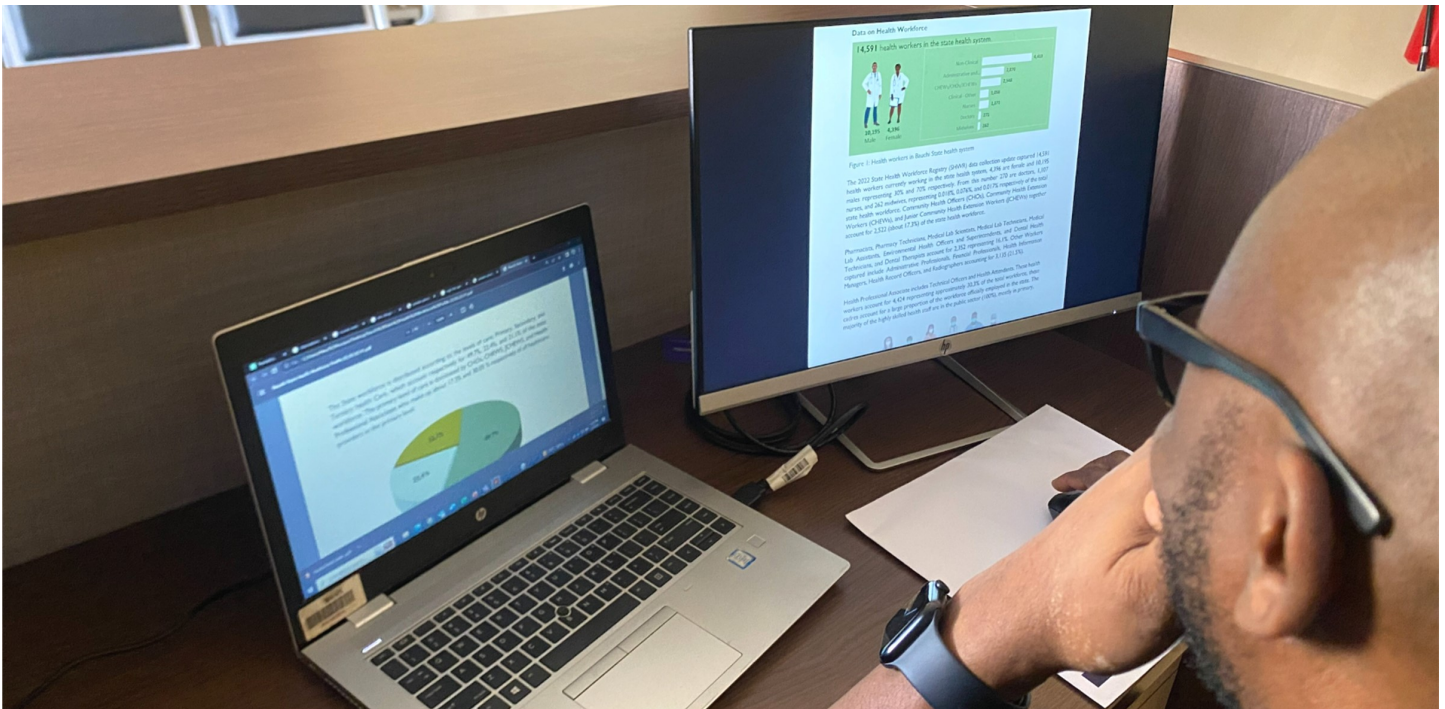


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data review meeting to review the data, highlight progress, and discuss any HRH data-related issues.

5. Strengthened health data governance structures in Bauchi State, using the available up-to-date HRH data. The State is better able to make more holistic decisions including the relationship between HRH and achievement of the State's health goals and targets.
6. Adoption of the KoboToolbox electronic tool for HRH

data collection by the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) following the successes and lessons learned in updating the Bauchi SHWR

Impact

An updated Bauchi SHWR highlights the health worker gaps and informs the ongoing recruitment and eventual deployment of health workers in the State as evidenced by the recent recruitment of 594 primary health care workers.

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The Health Workforce Management (HWM) Activity is a USAID/Nigeria task order under the Integrated Health Systems (IHS) indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contract. HWM supports the establishment of a cost-effective, well-trained, and motivated health workforce in targeted rural and remote areas of Bauchi, Ebonyi, Kebbi, and Sokoto States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

HWM strengthens the pre-service training learning environment and in-service training programs; supports the development of a robust HRIS to keep track of recruitment, deployment, retention, and continuing education; strengthens governance and management of the health workforce; and supports HRH research to improve HRH practices and retention mechanisms.

Banyan Global implements HWM in collaboration with Abt Associates, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI), and Solina Health.