

Seventy-sixth session of the Regional Committee for Africa

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Second progress report on the African regional framework for the implementation of the global strategy on human resources for health: Workforce 2030 Region (AFR-RC76-INF-DOC-7)

The International Council of Nurses (ICN), the global federation of national nurses' associations and the voice of nursing internationally, welcomes progress in implementing the African regional health workforce framework.

However, the coexistence of a 6.1 million health worker shortage with 27% unemployment among qualified health workers exposes a critical failure to convert education into funded employment and equitable access to care. ICN urges Member States to move rapidly from workforce strategies to costed and financed investment plans that create jobs, retain experienced professionals, and strengthen safe, supportive workplaces.

Investment in nursing offers exceptional value: it expands access, advances universal health coverage, strengthens resilience, and contributes to economic and social development. Workforce plans must support fair pay, safe staffing, career progression, full scope of practice, and responsible international mobility.

ICN encourages Member States to draw on Sustain and Retain in 2022 and Beyond; the International Nurses Day reports including The Economic Power of Care and Empowered Nurses Save Lives; and ICN's 2025 NNA Presidents' Survey, Assessing the Global Sustainability of the Nursing Workforce.

National Nursing Associations and government chief nursing officers should be meaningfully engaged in workforce planning, implementation, data, monitoring and accountability.