



Capacity Kenya  
Technical Brief No. 2

## HUMAN RESOURCES INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR THE HEALTH SECTOR

### BACKGROUND

Kenya's health sector continues to face challenges in human resources for health (HRH), including an insufficient number of skilled workers and suboptimal distribution of these health workers. In an effort to reverse these trends and improve health service delivery, the Ministry of Medical Services (MOMS) and the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation (MOPHS) have put in place strategies for addressing the constraints to human resource development and management. Addressing these challenges requires accurate and up-to-date information on the availability and capacity of Kenya's human resources.

A comprehensive *human resources information system* (HRIS) to support human resources management functions in the public health sector is being implemented by the Ministries of Health. The HRIS, supported by the USAID-funded Capacity Kenya project, is integrated with existing human resources (HR) and other health sector information systems.

### WHAT IS HRIS?

A well-functioning HRIS collects, stores, and manages data on HR management functions (e.g., appointment processing, transfers, promotions, training, and disciplinary actions). With this information, HR managers and health leaders can make informed decisions on recruitment, deployment, staff development, and other forms of support needed for the health workforce.

The goal is to ensure that a comprehensive HRIS is implemented in the health sector, integrated and interoperable with other related existing health information systems. While the public sector data has been incorporated into the HRIS, the system currently does not contain information on the number, skills mix, and deployment of private sector (including faith-based) health workers.

Currently, the HRIS is being rolled out to cover sub-national health units and departments—to include counties as part of the new Constitution—in public, private, and faith-based health facilities.



## HRIS ROLLOUT IN KENYA

Since its inception in April 2009, the Capacity Kenya project has supported the Ministries of Health in HRIS development and rollout. This support has included establishing the information and communication technology infrastructure needed to support the HRIS, developing and populating the HRIS database, and providing access to the directors and other relevant users in the Human Resource Department (HRD), the Human Resource Management Department, the Planning Department, and the Gender Department.

Capacity Kenya is also supporting the Ministries of Health to rollout the HRIS to all counties to make comprehensive data available in line with the new decentralized health system. More than 150 employees from various departments at the ministries have been trained on how to use the database. Other capacity building efforts include training staff members on open source technology so they can develop and customize the HRIS, and training and mentoring policy-makers to use HR information and understand innovations in technology.

A helpdesk is being set up to support the HRIS rollout and to offer ongoing support to users at all levels. Linkages will also be made with health professional councils, faith-based organizations, private facilities, and pre-service training institutions. A core group of six employees from the Ministries of Health employees (four information and communication technology officers and two HR officers) were trained on HRIS use and customization and will be responsible for answering user queries and supporting customization and rollout of the database system. Plans are also underway to upgrade the file server to effectively respond to the needs of the expected high number of users at the county level.

## EXPANDING HRIS FUNCTIONALITY

Capacity Kenya has developed a continuing professional development (CPD) module and upgrade of the software with the functionality to manage staff establishment. The CPD module will allow scheduling of courses for staff and will support decision-making by the HRD and line managers on diverse training needs and staff requests.

A module to manage staff returns data for technical cadres has been developed, tested, and incorporated into the HRIS. In addition, a new module enabling HR officers to capture performance appraisal and employee skills data was developed and will be rolled out to provinces and counties alongside the HRIS. Finally, an import/export feature was developed to link the HRIS with the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Database (IPPD), enabling the transfer of up-to-date data from that database into the HRIS.

## DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING

Accessing data is a necessary condition but not sufficient; the ability to use this data to inform decision-making is paramount to improved policies and health outcomes. Capacity Kenya is supporting the Ministries to strengthen their ability to use data for decision-making and has focused on expanding access and increasing visibility and usability of the HRIS. To date, 125 HR managers have participated in workshops on data driven decision-making. In the recent past for example, users of HRIS data at the Ministries of Health have been guided through advanced data analysis that examined the distribution of existing health workers and skills mix in government. This was aimed at establishing existing staffing gaps and skewed distributions to inform staffing decisions as the requirements of the new Constitution are being implemented.

Additional information on the HRIS and the Capacity Kenya project is available at:

[www.capacitykenya.org](http://www.capacitykenya.org).

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