

## Statement on agenda item 17.2 Progress report on the African regional framework for the implementation of the Global strategy on human resources for health: Workforce 2030

### **Written statement 350 words**

The World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists (WFSA) represents 100,000's of anaesthesiologists in 142 countries, nearly a third of our member societies are from Africa.

The global COVID response underlined the indispensability of the anaesthesia workforce to a functioning and safe health system. As acknowledged in WHA Resolution 68.15 we will not realise Universal Health Coverage targets without a sufficiently trained and resourced anaesthesia workforce.

The African region continues to face a chronic lack of trained anaesthesia professionals. The WFSA's Global Anaesthesia Workforce Survey found that Africa has a physician anaesthesia provider density of just 0.44 per 100,000 population, far below the internationally recommended interim target of 5 per 100,000 (Gelb et al, 2018).

The evidence-base shows that investment into clinician-led Continued Medical Education and Professional development training programmes are a cost-effective means of maintaining and improving the skills and competencies of the anaesthesia workforce (Lilaonitkul et al, 2020).

WFSA together with its partners, has developed a sustainable clinician-led training and education programme for physicians and non-physician providers. This offers a cost-effective and scalable model which by which member states can actively engage with professional bodies to strengthen in-country surgical workforces.

As highlighted by WFSA's work with the WHO Academy, our members place a significant emphasis on the accessibility of quality e-learning resources. To meet the training targets outlined in the HRH Framework we welcome the Framework's call for Member States to actively engage with professional bodies such as WFSA to ensure that the training curriculum and technical infrastructure meet the education requirements of clinicians.

For WHO Africa Region member states to meet the WHO recommended workforce targets there is an urgent need to develop and implement, national policy and financing frameworks that will sustainably grow and support vital anaesthesia services.

WFSA calls on WHO Africa region member states and key stakeholders to:

- Address chronic workforce deficiencies through investment in anaesthesia and surgical care and the provision of training and continued medical education.
- Actively engage with national professional bodies and their international federations as they develop their HRH strategies.
- Prioritise the development of National Surgical, Obstetrics and Anaesthesia Plans (NSOAP).