

November 17, 2021

The Honorable Samantha Power
Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development

Dear Administrator Power:

We the undersigned organizations, including members of the Frontline Health Workers Coalition, commend you and the Biden Administration for your strong leadership in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic and for recognizing the bold policy and resource commitments that will be required to ensure America and the world are better prepared for future infectious disease outbreaks.

At the recent Global COVID Summit, President Biden announced a series of significant commitments to enhance the global COVID-19 response and future pandemic preparedness. The Summit targets included support for vaccine readiness and delivery as well as personal protective equipment for health workers. We welcome these commitments and urge the US to go further by championing rapid vaccination of all health workers, including community health workers, as well as accurate and comprehensive reporting by countries on vaccination and COVID-19 deaths among health workers. We hope that your meeting with development ministers later this year to discuss next steps in the COVID-19 response will provide an opportunity for you to urge countries to prioritize these and other concerns related to the well-being of the health workforce.

Secondly, we are excited to learn that the Biden Administration is developing a new initiative to provide greater support to health workers in low- and middle-income countries. We welcome this initiative because we believe we cannot succeed in advancing our objectives in global health, health security, gender equality, climate resilience, and human development unless we address the significant weaknesses in health systems and health workforces. Current funding levels and accounts at USAID are not adequate to properly address this challenge. Therefore, we offer the following specific recommendations to ensure that the new initiative is fit-for-purpose, action-oriented, and designed to succeed.

1. Dedicate at least \$500 million in new funding over the next five years for a new USAID Global Health Programs sub-account to support health workforce development and health systems strengthening in partner countries. We request that at least \$100 million in initial funding for this new sub-account be included in the President's FY 23 budget request.
2. Focus the initiative's programs on improving community-based primary health care in countries already investing in their health workforces; support for cadres including nurses, physicians, midwives, and community health workers; and support for local health workforce associations, including skills training in leadership, advocacy, and communications.
3. Ensure all frontline health workers, including community health workers, are well-trained, equipped, protected, and fairly remunerated, while addressing the specific

needs, as well as leadership and economic potential, of women, who make up 70% of the health workforce.

4. Coordinate and harmonize implementation of the initiative across existing US government agencies and multilateral mechanisms while ensuring standardized reporting requirements and indicators across investments in human resources.
5. Align this effort with global health security investments and ensure such investments support the public health role, and safety on the job, of a broad range of health personnel.

As the premier bilateral development agency in the world, with an impressive track record of success in global health, USAID is uniquely positioned to lead this new initiative, in close coordination with interagency and international partners. Therefore, we urge you to prioritize new, dedicated funding for health systems and health workers for the FY 23 Budget request so that USAID can boldly implement this initiative, in collaboration with other agencies.

Thank you again for your tremendous leadership, and please let us know how our organizations can be a resource to help advance this critical new initiative to support health workers around the world as well as your immediate efforts in response to COVID-19, including for vaccine equity.

Sincerely,

Organizations based in the US:

ADRA International

American Heart Association

Amref Health Africa

AVAC

CARE

Community Health Impact Coalition (CHIC)

CORE Group

Curamericas Global

Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation

Field Ready

Friends of the Global Fight Against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

Frontline Health Workers Coalition

Fund for Global Health

Global Alliance for Surgical, Obstetric, Trauma & Anaesthesia Care (The G4 Alliance)

Global Communities

Global Health Corps

HealthRight International

Hesperian Health Guides

International Medical Corps

IntraHealth International

Last Mile Health

Management Sciences for Health
Medicines for Humanity
MiracleFeet
Muso
ONE
Partners in Health
PATH
Pathfinder International
PSI
Resolve To Save Lives, an Initiative of Vital Strategies
ReSurge International
R2H Action [Right to Health], USA
Sabin Vaccine Institute
Seed Global Health
Smile Train
Training for Health Equity Network: THEnet
VillageReach
WaterAid America
What to Expect Project
White Ribbon Alliance
Women Deliver
Women in Global Health

Organizations based outside the US

ACHEST (The African Centre for Global Health and Social Transformation), Uganda
African Parliamentary Forum on Population and Development
Building Capacities for Better Health (BCH-Africa), Cameroon
Centre for Accountability and Inclusive Development (CAAID), Nigeria
CHESTRAD Global, Nigeria
Concern Worldwide, Ireland
Financing Alliance for Health, Kenya
GLIDE (Global Institute for Disease Elimination), United Arab Emirates
Health NGOs Network (HENNET), Kenya
Health Workers for All Coalition
International Community of Women living with HIV Eastern Africa, Uganda
KANCO, Kenya
Madhira Institute, Kenya
Medicus Mundi, Spain
People's Health Movement, Kenya
Rural Infrastructure and Human Resource Development Organization (RIHRDO), Pakistan
SAMOCRI, Nigeria
Speak Up Africa, Senegal

Uganda Alliance of Patients' Organizations (UAPO), Uganda
The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Network (WASH-Net), Sierra Leone
WHOCC on Family Medicine and Primary Health Care, Ghent University, Belgium
Women Together Edu-Cultural Center, Kenya

For more information, or to discuss our recommendations, please contact David Bryden at dbryden@intrahealth.org.