

## Top Policy Recommendations to Build the Health Workforce Back Better

A critical lesson from the COVID-19 pandemic is that we must invest in strengthening the health workforce, both for emergency response and for keeping health services fully functioning. The following are urgent actions that policy-makers and funders must undertake at all levels to prepare the workforce for the future.

1. **Allocate funding** for long-term health systems and health workforce strengthening. Ensure pandemic preparedness and global health security funding supports workforce planning capacity and a broad range of frontline health workers, including nurses, midwives, and community health workers (CHWs).
2. **Address violence against health workers** and the places where they work. Hold perpetrators accountable for international humanitarian and human rights law violations at the global level, and create or strengthen policies and enforcement mechanisms at the national and local levels to end violence against health workers, especially women.
3. **Ensure safe and decent work for all health workers**, including women and community health workers. Make personal protective equipment (PPE) available; provide fair and timely pay and career advancement opportunities; ensure adequate water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services; and ensure all health workers have access to health services without financial hardship. These health services must include access to mental health services and priority health protection, such as COVID-19 vaccination.
4. **Collect health worker data, disaggregated by gender**, on all types of health workers and use it to make informed decisions about long-term national health workforce planning, including for education, recruitment, management, and retention to address shortages. Increase investments in health worker information systems and incorporate them into all global health security and pandemic preparedness planning to make the most of limited workforces by allocating them efficiently during emergencies.
5. **Integrate community health workers into national health systems** and pay them fairly. CHWs in particular are under-supported, even though they play a crucial role in pandemic response and providing quality care, and could be tapped to do even more. Many CHWs are still not paid or are underpaid, and most of them are women.
6. **Involve frontline health workers—including women, nurses, midwives, and CHWs—in health policy-making**, including emergency response committees, budget planning, and donor consultations. Ensure global health initiatives include frontline workers in health policy planning bodies, such as in Country Coordinating Mechanisms.

Tell us what you think policy-makers and funders need to do to build the health workforce back better. [Join our video campaign.](#)