



PARALLEL SESSION 1.2

INVESTING IN THE HEALTH WORKFORCE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

| BACKGROUND

The Astana Declaration recognized the importance of health workforce education, employment, motivation and retention and pledged to strengthen the primary health care workforce to effectively respond to community and population needs. Estimates show a projected shortfall of 18 million health workers by 2030 to achieve and sustain universal health coverage (UHC), primarily in low- and lower middle-income countries. The Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health and the report of the United Nations' High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth have each elaborated a health workforce transformation and investment agenda for UHC and the SDGs. In 2017, the ILO-OECD-WHO Working for Health Programme was established to advance the operationalization of the Commission's recommendations, particularly at country level. This session will present and discuss country experiences, highlighting priority actions taken to close the anticipated 18 million health worker gap and expand and transform the health and social workforce for universal health coverage and the SDGs.

| OBJECTIVES

To highlight key actions and results from a range of countries that have taken concrete steps to drive investment in their health and social care workforce in line with the recommendations of the high-level commission, including those supported through the ILO-OECD-WHO Working for Health Programme. The session will explore how multisectoral engagement in economic development, job creation and community-based services can successfully leverage investments, resources and policy support to build a fit for purpose and sustainable health and social workforce for UHC and the SDGs.



Moderator

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Dr Kumanan Rasanathan is a public health physician with degrees in medicine, public health and political science. For the last 12 years, he has worked at WHO and UNICEF. In his career, Kumanan has managed programmes, provided clinical services and delivered technical assistance in several different countries. Kumanan currently works in the WHO Cambodia Office leading the health systems and maternal and child health teams, where he spearheads WHO's support to the Cambodian government on moving towards universal health coverage (UHC), with a focus on primary care. As part of this work, Kumanan leads WHO's technical support to the Working For Health project in Cambodia, focusing on developing the next health workforce development plan, facilitating a multisectoral dialogue on health workforce, undertaking a labour market analysis, and improving health workforce data.