Seventy-forth session of the Regional Committee for Africa

Provisional agenda Item 11
Framework for integrating country and regional health data in the African Region: Regional Data Hub 2024–2030 (Document AFR/RC74/7)

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Thank you for the opportunity to represent the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the over 28 million nurses worldwide. ICN recognizes the critical role of health data in enhancing healthcare quality while upholding patient privacy and data security. We fully support the proposed framework for integrating health data across the African region. The recent mpox outbreak highlights the importance of timely and accurate data collection and reporting in early outbreak detection and effective public health responses.

Nurses, as frontline care providers, must be integral to data collection efforts and involved in planning how data is gathered and utilized. Their practical insights are invaluable in shaping health interventions and ensuring that data collection processes are both comprehensive and relevant to real-world needs.

Furthermore, ICN strongly supports the data collection for the upcoming State of the World's Nursing report, set to be launched in 2025. We urge Member States to actively contribute to this effort by collecting and sharing robust health workforce data with WHO. Such data is essential for informed decision-making in long-term workforce planning and for devising strategies to improve health system performance.

ICN recently submitted a comprehensive evidence-based report to WHO on the Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel, highlighting alarming trends in nurse recruitment and insufficient country reporting. There is an urgent need for detailed data on various aspects of the health workforce, including cadre types, training levels, age demographics, nurse migration and recruitment patterns, and geographic distribution. Accurate and comprehensive data are essential for effective workforce planning and to ensure health systems are prepared for future challenges. ICN is dedicated to collaborating with global partners to enhance data integration, ultimately improving health outcomes across the African region and beyond.