Youth need jobs. Employers project health worker needs. What does it take to get a job in health care?

71 million unemployed youth

40 million projected jobs in health

There are 71 million unemployed youth in the world. In developing countries, the youth unemployment rate is about 9.5 percent. Many young people in low- and lower-middle income countries are working but unable to lift themselves out of poverty without decent work. Young women have higher unemployment rates than young men in some places, despite the rising educational attainment of young women (ILO 2016).

WHO's Global Human Resources for Health (HRH) Strategy: Workforce 2030 estimates that 40 million new health jobs will be created by 2030 (WHO 2016). We propose a vision for how health professional schools, including technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, and health employers can adapt positive youth development approaches to build and support the future health workforce. Adapting the health labor market (Sousa et al. 2013) and positive youth development frameworks (Hinson et al. 2016), we demonstrate optimal partnerships for engaging and preparing youth to become the future health workforce [Figure 1]. Youth in health employment is an opportunity to achieve Workforce 2030 goals and other SDGs including reduced poverty, quality education, reduced inequalities, decent work, gender equity, and health for all.

Figure 1. Optimal Partnerships and Opportunities for Positive Youth Development and Health for All

**EDUCATION SECTOR**

Best Practices to Build a Youth Health Workforce

- Recruit high-potential students committed to their communities
- Provide opportunities for professional preparedness
- Further develop interpersonal & STEMM skills
- Invest in faculty skills and as mentors
- Engage employers to develop relevant, practical curricula

**EMPLOYMENT IN HEALTH**

Best Practices for Optimizing and Sustaining the Health Workforce

- Focus on “private-for-public-purpose” sector jobs
- Establish career development paths in emerging areas
- Provide mentoring and continued professional development
- Promote decent work and cadre professionalization

Adapted from Sousa et al. 2013 and Hinson et al. 2016.

**HEALTH FOR ALL**

Positive Youth Development Impact:
The GE HCI program has demonstrated positive youth development in the following ways:

- Contributions: 96% of student families report a better understanding of the importance of hygiene and sanitation.
- Assets: 78% of graduates have been placed in jobs with an average annual salary of US$1,416 after tax.
- Agency: 80% of students report an increase in self-confidence and communication skills.

**ASSETS & AGENCY:** Potential and demonstrated interpersonal & STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math, and Medicine) skills; formal education and training; perseverance and goal-setting; positive identity and self efficacy

**CONTRIBUTION:** Youth engagement and vocation for a career in health

**ENABLING ENVIRONMENT:** Support, value, and recognition; physical and psychological safety; inclusivity; opportunities for community/prosocial engagement

Considered financing prohibitive higher education opportunities, job growth, and the expansion of differentiated models of the healthcare service delivery (e.g., task-sharing and use of technology), we direct our recommendations to health educators, such as TVET institutions and employers in health who are invested in private-for-public-purpose partnerships. Our framework of optimal partnerships demonstrates potential benefits:

**HEALTH FOR ALL**

Well-trained, well-supported, well-paid, and well-distributed health workers that are skilled in the health services needed by the populations they serve can help achieve health for all.

**POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (PYD)**

Effective health training and decent health employment can cultivate youth contribution, assets, agency, and enabling environment. PYD is essential to reduce the youth bulge, especially for marginalized, rural, female, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI) and economically disadvantaged youth.

PARTNERSHIP TO SKILL YOUTH FOR HEALTHCARE JOBS IN INDIA

Opportunities for youth in health employment:

In India, high youth unemployment rates, lack of access to quality health, and a growing health sector with increasing population indicate an opportunity to transform more youth for careers in health.

Educator-employer partnerships:

As part of the Prime Minister’s Skill India Mission, the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) was created to support private sector, skills-building initiatives across India. Established under the NSDC, the Healthcare Sector Skill Council (HSSC) sought to create an enabling ecosystem specific to the health sector. In October 2016, the Hi-Employ GE Healthcare Skill India Program (HSSC) to partner with Tata Trusts and other local organizations across India to train 10,000 youth for healthcare jobs and bridge the workforce skills gap across technology-driven health professional jobs. The partners have engaged existing private hospital networks to identify the appropriate hard and soft skills needed for entry-level jobs at these institutions. Also, Tata Trusts has supported accessible student loans to reduce the financial burden to families to invest in health professional education. As the end of the program, students undergo an HSSC-led examination and certification process for government accreditation.

Positive youth development impact:
The GE HCI program to train 10,000 youth is ongoing. So far, more than 2,300 students have enrolled. The program selects promising, socioeconomically-disadvantaged (annual household income of less than US$1,474) high school graduates, particularly young women. Students undertake targeted certification courses and practical internships for health professional roles, such as radiology, anesthesia, or cardiac care technicians. Thus far, the program has demonstrated positive youth development in the following ways:

- Contributions: 96% of student families report having a better understanding of the importance of hygiene and sanitation.
- Assets: 78% of graduates have been placed in jobs with an average annual salary of US$1,416 after tax.
- Agency: 80% of students report an increase in self-confidence and communication skills.

For the female students placed in jobs note they will delay marriage until they achieve financial independence.

- Enabling environment: 85% of enrolled students are seeking employability in the healthcare sector. Of those, 85% feel that the availability of soft loans enabled their decision to join the program.

Contributing to health for all:

Given India’s aging population and growing prevalence of non-communicable diseases, the need for health professionals is expected to grow.