



**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY**

TALKING NOTE BY

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CABINET SECRETARY LABOUR AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

**DURING THE FIRST JOINT MEETING BETWEEN ALL
AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
BILATERAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN KENYA AND THE
UNITED KINGDOM FOR COLLABORATION ON HEALTH CARE
WORKFORCE**

18TH AUGUST 2021 AT NSSF BUILDING

Let me take this opportunity to welcome you all to this meeting to discuss and agree on the implementation of the Bilateral Agreement with the UK government.

On 21st January 2020, His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta and Prime Minister Boris Johnson approved the framework for strategic partnership 2020-2025 between the Republic of Kenya and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The partnership allows for collaboration in five pillars namely (i) mutual prosperity, (ii) security and stability, (iii) sustainable development, (iv) climate change and (v) people to people- reflecting the key challenges and opportunities of our time.

Under the people-to-people pillar, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on health partnership was signed on 20th January, 2021 between the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Kenya and the Secretary for of State for Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Affairs and First Secretary of State in Nairobi, Kenya. The strategic objective of this partnership is to strengthen existing collaborations and explore new opportunities for collaboration in health between the Governments and their respective institutions.

The governments of the Republic of Kenya and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland signed a Bilateral Agreement for collaboration on healthcare workforce on 29th July 2021. The Agreement allows Kenyan healthcare professional to be recruited to work in the National Health Service (NHS) of the UK. Under the Agreement, the two governments will undertake capacity enhancement of human resources for health for purposes of delivery of basic and specialized services, by promoting knowledge and skills transfer.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has been mandated to spearhead implementation of the Agreement in terms of recruitment and facilitating migration of qualified candidates to the United Kingdom. This will be carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. The first batch of Health Care Workers targeted for recruitment under the Agreement are Nurses.

Under the framework of the agreement, the countries agreed to:

1. Facilitate, through the relevant institutions, the adoption and development of recruitment procedures through the relevant institutions for health care professionals within the framework of this Memorandum of Understanding and applicable laws and regulations of the participants.
2. Foster bilateral exchanges of communication on policy direction regarding health professional workforce development and best practices in the delivery of Health Care.
3. Draw up an action plan to implement the above two activities within three months of signature of this Memorandum of Understanding.
4. Continue to explore opportunities for short term educational placements for healthcare professionals and leaders, in both directions between the Participants, in order to share learning and develop skills for staff in the

health systems of both Kenya and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

5. Cooperate in capacity building of health care professionals and benchmarking to maintain global standards for professionals.

The purpose of today's meeting therefore is to agree on the best approach to implement this Bilateral Agreement. Among the key areas of concern is to clearly define the roles and responsibility of every agency that will be involved in this project.

From where I sit I think the role of the UK government will be to detail the number of healthcare professionals, the type of skills and the level of qualifications they require.

The UK Agencies will liaise with the accredited and licensed employment agencies in Kenya to start recruiting the health care professionals to fill the available vacancies.

The Ministry of Labour will verify the labour demand letter for health care professionals received from the employment agencies in Kenya.

The Kenyan accredited and licensed employment agencies will advertise the vacancies in the media, shortlist, and interview and select the qualified healthcare professionals to fill the vacancies in UK.

The Kenyan accredited and licensed employment agencies, through the National Employment Authority (NEA) in the Ministry of Labour, shall submit the details of the selected candidates to the respective health professional regulatory bodies under the Ministry of Health for verification of registration and licensing status of the candidate.

The Ministry of Health will provide feedback to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection on the candidates who are registered and licensed by their professional regulatory bodies and qualify for consideration.

The accredited and licensed employment agencies shall ensure that the selected candidates acquire all the required travel documents to facilitate clearance by the Ministry of Labour.

The Department of immigration will be expected to confirm that all those who seek for passport are assisted to get the passport much easier and to ensure that at the point of exit at the airport, they will confirm that the nurses have been cleared to travel.

The Ministry of Foreign affairs will be expected to liaise with the UK agencies through our High commission in UK to negotiate for vacancies in NHS among other activities as will be identified by the Joint Implementation Committee.

All successful applicants will undergo pre-departure training prior to migration to the United Kingdom. The Ministry of Labour will identify and accredit training providers to offer pre-departure training to successful applicants.

The pre-departure training programme will include: General information on the UK (culture, climate, remittances, do's and don'ts, helplines, emergency situations), UK Labour laws; Nature of the UK health care system; Work permit; the UK National Health Service (NHS) Terms and Conditions of Service; Life skills (Communication, personal development, financial management, investment, employee-employer relationship), Professional development, Diaspora associations, Consular services; Employment contracts; and Accredited employment agencies.

The Ministry of Labour will develop Information Handbooks on the UK and update the Kenyan Migrant Workers website to include information and data on the UK.

The ministry of labour and social protection has so far undertaken the following activities towards implementation of the Bilateral Agreement :

- a. Formation of a Ministerial Project Management Team to spearhead technical aspects of implementing the Bilateral Agreement. The Team will carry out day-to-day activities and provide inputs for the work of the Joint Implementation Committee (JIC).
- b. Developed a Work Plan for implementation of the Bilateral Agreement.
- c. Developed draft Guidelines for employment of Nurses in the UK.
- d. Developed a brief on Information to Applicants to be accessed by Nurses interested in working in the UK under the Bilateral Agreement.
- e. Published a request for Expression of Interest from qualified Kenyan Nurses for employment in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under the Bilateral Agreement for collaboration on Health Care Workforce
- f. Developed a specialized portal on the National Employment Authority (NEA) website for registration by qualified Nurses interested in working in the UK under the Bilateral Agreement.
- g. Written letters to the Ministries of Health, Foreign Affairs ;and Interior and Coordination of National Government seeking names of their representatives to the Joint Implementation Committee (JIC) for the Bilateral Agreement.

I am happy therefore, that in response to the letters written asking for nomination of officers, the ministries have responded and therefore managed to have today's meeting.

By the end of today's meeting, my expectation is that, all Agencies will know their role and responsibilities so that we minimise duplication and possible overlaps, we also need to agree on the road map for the implementation of this Bilateral Agreement noting that we have a deadline of delivering the first cohort before 1st November,

Last, I wish to table a draft workplan and road map developed by the project team here in the ministry of Labour and Social Protection so that I can guide the JIC in their meeting.

Thank you