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# Over 40% health professionals in Ghana unemployed —Research

BY CLIFF EKUFUL

**M**ORE than 40 per cent of the overall “stock” of qualified health workers trained in the country remain unemployed, a research has revealed.

The health professionals include medical doctors, nurses and other allied health services professionals.

The staggering figure was revealed at the Global Health Workforce Programme stakeholders meeting in Accra yesterday.

The Global Health Workforce Programme (GHWP) is a major initiative aimed at strengthening the country’s health workforce and health system.

It is also to advance progress towards Universal Health Coverage and has been supporting health partnerships in Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria.

Delivering a report on the Reflections on the Ghana Health Labour Market

Analysis Report on how the GHWP and Health Partnerships are aligning with the report, Dr Yaa Twum Barimah, the Technical Officer, Health Training and Human Resources for Health at the World Health Organisation, Ghana said one of the challenges accounting for this high number of unemployed professionals was mainly due to the lack of fiscal space.

She noted that with a chunk of trained professionals being unemployed the country was likely to face more labour unrest as witnessed intermittently.

Apart from labour unrest, the situation also had consequences for the private sector which often offered opportunities for these unemployed professionals.

“Beyond that if you have a healthcare system and you don’t have the required number that you actually need, it means that those who are actually employed are going to work double,” she emphasised.

In addition to these high number of unemployed professionals, she said the

health sector was also having a challenge of high attrition rate with the figure stand-

ing at about three per cent annually. This level of attrition was more worry-

ing because most often it was the highly skilled professionals who were leaving the sector.

Dr Twum Barimah said it was important for the gaps within the health sector to be addressed in order to strengthen Healthcare delivery in the country.

This she said would require that government looked at a raft of measures including providing incentives to the private sector to recruit and retain a number of these unemployed professionals.

On her part, the Technical Manager at GHP, Jessica Fresar, explained that the GHWP had 18 projects in Ghana.

The projects she said had worked as a partnership between the United Kingdom, Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya with the sole aim of improving different areas of health workforce strengthening and health system strengthening.



• Participants