



Nurses from the African region speak of the successes and challenges of nursing on the continent at ICN's virtual Congress

Geneva, Switzerland, 3 November 2021 - Nurses in Africa presented a dynamic picture of the profession on the continent, in a series of lively recorded and live sessions as part of International Council of Nurses (ICN) virtual Congress, which is running from 2-4 November 2021.

The session was introduced by Rwanda's Minister of Health Dr Ngamije Daniel, who highlighted the vital role of nurse and spoke of the importance of greater investment in nurse training, the shortage of nurses in Africa and globally, and urged nurses on the continent to work collaboratively for the benefits of patients.

There were discussions about African nurses' responses to COVID-19 and the challenges of improving health outcomes in the face of the shortages. It was clearly stated that nurses remain the backbone of healthcare systems in Africa, and that any investment in nursing is an investment in the health of communities.

A panel discussion, led by Co-Chair of Nursing Now Professor Sheila Tlou, covered the benefits of better health outcomes in Africa, non-communicable diseases, infectious diseases, nurses' roles in the delivery of services to help meet universal health coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals, harnessing nursing capacity and building sustainable relationships.

A number of challenges were highlighted, including the lack of nurse leaders in Ministries of Health to be able to influence health policymaking at the very highest levels of government and the importance of creating Advanced Practice Nurse positions so that nurses can work at the top of their scopes of practice.

Some countries are taking the lead by adopting nurse-led models of care, especially in primary care and public health, and in the care and treatment of people with HIV.

A list of areas that require additional investment on the continent include competency-based education, faculty staff (educators), the modernisation of nurse regulation, continuous professional development, and nurse leadership, collaboration and research.

To access recordings of the African regional session, and the rest of ICN Congress go to:
<https://congress2021.icnevents.online/>.