4. Better reflecting the diversity of Member States

Responding to Member State requests, the Human Resources Management unit and the Division of Programme Management are working together to support the GoWHO initiative, which addresses the issue of under-representation of Member States in WHO staffing.

The WHO human resources policy highlights the desirability of recruiting staff from as wide a geographic basis as possible. Still, 32% of Member States continue to be either unrepresented or under-represented in the international professional staff category.

Through a series of workshops and learning opportunities, the GoWHO initiative supports those Member States by working to raise awareness of WHO, encouraging young people to pursue a career in public health and attracting talent. The initiative also provides coaching on how to prepare to join WHO.

Over the past 12 months, workshops were held in China, Fiji and Japan, with nearly 300 face-to-face participants. In Japan, three satellite sessions were connected to the Tokyo workshop via videoconference, and 16,000 people tuned in to a live stream in China.

Workshop participants were introduced to WHO and shown ways to improve their resumes and written tests. They also practised competency-based interviews with feedback from peers and WHO staff.

“Thank you very much for conducting this workshop,” wrote one participant. “It helped me to understand the overall recruitment process of WHO and what they expect, and was full of practical tips.”

Group photo of WHO country office staff in Cambodia.