



# GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY ROADMAP

2022-2023

UNITED  
FOR  
GLOBAL  
MENTAL  
HEALTH

**We want a world in which everyone, everywhere has someone and somewhere to turn to in support of their mental health and wellbeing.**

**We will only achieve this with a significant increase in political and financial support for mental health to accelerate action to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and achieve the right of everyone to good physical and mental health\*.**

\*This document uses 'mental health' as a shorthand for 'mental health and psychosocial support' (MHPSS) – but we are clear that both elements are equally important. Mental health includes emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing.

The Global Mental Health Advocacy Roadmap 2022-2023 sets out clear objectives and opportunities that will help achieve this. It is the product of UnitedGMH, on behalf of the Global Mental Health Action Network in conjunction with the Office of the UN Secretary General, WHO, UNICEF and a host of mental health champions across civil society, governments, international organisations and trusts and foundations. Four years of foundational work and consolidation by the global mental health community in 2018-2021 have delivered notable progress (see boxes below).

The current state of momentum for mental health, especially high-level political, financial support and member state advocacy, remains far from sufficient. Only a proactive approach towards advocacy, action and acceleration to move the mental health and psychosocial wellbeing agenda forward will help deliver tangible and transformational change. Many opportunities exist to help achieve this vision over 2022 and beyond. A growing group of global champions, progressive governments and increasing grassroots efforts, are combining with greater involvement of those with lived experience, to accelerate efforts to achieve good mental health for all.

## WHAT WE WILL ACHIEVE

### 1. Global and National Policy Reform

- The promotion of mental health by key **global institutions and organisations**, including UN agencies, the World Bank and the Global Fund (in its 2023-2028 strategy and implementation).
- The integration of mental health **across sectors** and in plans to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the promotion of a social determinants approach to mental health.
- Increased and improved **financial support** for mental health through domestic and international investments; and including as a costed component of Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans.
- Prioritization of MHPSS in **emergency, migration and conflict settings** and integrated into peacebuilding interventions.
- Prioritization of MHPSS in **climate change resilience and response** and increased investment in mental health as part of the efforts to combat climate change.
- Promotion of **workplace practices** conducive to mental and physical health and wellbeing.

## 2. Integration of Mental Health in Universal Health Coverage

- The inclusion of mental health as an essential component of **Universal Health Coverage** (UHC) plans at **international and national levels**.
- The elevation of mental health as a priority alongside physical health in the national and international response to, and recovery from global health emergencies, specifically the **COVID-19 pandemic**.

## 3. Uphold the Rights of All Persons to Good Physical and Mental Health

- In line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) including the scaling up of alternatives to coercion in health and judicial settings.
- Opposed to further developments in legislation, policy and programmes that are contrary to rights-based approaches.
- Promoting a human rights-based approach to mental health as a requirement for quality services.

## 4. Strengthened monitoring and accountability

- Better collection and harmonisation of **disaggregated data**. Use of data encouraged by all stakeholders to help ensure political momentum delivers better mental health for all.

## 5. Development and dissemination of best practice

- Increased political and financial support for **mental health research**.
- Identifying the best means to prevent and treat mental health conditions.
- Intensified efforts to deliver implementation research that scales up services and support.

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At the heart of our strategy is our vision for a world where everyone, everywhere has someone to turn to for their mental health.”

## THE OPPORTUNITY

Over the past 4 years (2018-2021) mental health has risen sharply up the political agenda. Accelerated by the impact of COVID-19, a broad cross section of society is now calling for greater action. Young people have been joined by parents and employers, from sectors as diverse as banking, music and sport, demanding change and seeking to put in place better mental health policies and practice for all. It is now widely accepted that mental health impacts people throughout the life course including during their most productive years. Research from The Wellcome Trust shows 92% of people consider mental health as important or more important than physical health for overall wellbeing.

Whilst there is more discussion of mental health in political fora, the workplace, on social media and among friends and families than ever before, the dramatic rise in levels of discussion are not reflected in the still woefully limited levels of funding. The combined impact of a challenging economic outlook, the ongoing pandemic, and the impacts of other social determinants such as the climate and ecological crisis has increased the demand for mental health support – for all ages. Yet these same factors have restricted supply due to reduced spending, lack of human capacity and restriction of movement. And there remains considerable stigma surrounding mental health.

Today there is greater recognition than ever before of the social determinants of mental health - from the economic to the environmental - and a multi-sectoral approach will be required. In part due to COVID-19 and due to the sustained momentum global mental health has, the sector is attracting new donors and those who have traditionally funded mental health are increasing their investments. 2022 and beyond will be critical. The increased attention needs to be translated into action - both financial investment and greater human capacity to deliver the changes required to achieve good mental health for all.



## THE ROADMAP FOR 2022-2023:

During the next two years we anticipate that mental health will remain a concern among the public, and a point of discussion among families and communities, in schools and in workplaces. Parents and children will continue to demand better mental health support; and employers will accelerate efforts to achieve better workplace mental health.

However, around the world, governments' commitments to act may wane without significant additional pressure by the mental health community due to competing needs and limited public funding. The IMF projects a "great divergence" in economic recovery from the pandemic due to lack of access to vaccines and reduced trade and investment. This means the very poorest countries are likely to fall further behind economically and this is likely to negatively impact mental health. Hence a focus on these countries is particularly important to helping ensure everyone's right to good mental health is upheld.

A series of international political moments could potentially galvanise action on mental health at global and national level. The annual mental health ministerial summits look set to continue (Italy hosting in 2022), and there are positive indications mental health will be discussed as part of wider reflections on health among the G7 and G20. New international opportunities to put mental health on the international agenda include: the 2022 UN Education Summit, 2023 UN Future Generations Summit and the 2023 UN SDGs Summit. Moreover the 2025 UN Social Summit is an event to work towards to help drive further action, particularly in LMICs among the most marginalised communities. These summits encourage all governments to participate and therefore opportunities to leverage momentum among governments. Combined with ongoing dialogues on the environment including COP27 in Egypt, these international moments will be critical to addressing short- and longer-term mental health needs around the world. In addition, there are opportunities to leverage international assistance. Most notably through: the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, the Global Financing Facility, and the World Bank; investment in UHC and in primary health; linking mental health to the response to, and recovery from, COVID-19; and integrating mental health into climate and environment risk reduction and response programming.

To keep the pressure on governments to address short- and longer-term mental health needs, mental health must become a political issue that impacts voting and informs voter choices for commitments to turn to action and investment. National level advocacy and influencing is critically important.







## THE OUTCOMES WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

### Political, Policy and Funding Commitments

- Targets of the **WHO Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan (2021-2030)** garner high level political support and additional funding. This support will reflect the better integration of mental health in **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)** plans that will be discussed at the UHC high level meeting in 2023; **COVID-19** national and international level response and recovery plans; and national **SDG** plans.
- **Increased sustainable multi-sectoral funding** for mental health and psychosocial wellbeing is secured through domestic and international investments. It includes continuing work to reach the Lancet Commission proposed targets of national LMICs governments spending at least 5% and high income countries at least 10% of their health budgets on mental health across sectors. Mental health public expenditure increased across other relevant sectors e.g. education, social welfare.
- Existing and new financing mechanisms are leveraged including the **Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria**, the **Global Financing Facility**, and the **NCDs and Mental Health Trust Fund**. **Mental health** financing is included in discussions at the G7, G20, and replenishments of the GF and GFF.
- From 2022 - 2023 governments produce their **SDG review reports** for presentation at a **UN SDDG summit in 2023**. Advocates will encourage governments to integrate mental health in their plans and hold them accountable for their promises through the SDG reports produced.
- Environmental meetings will include acknowledgement of the mental health impacts of the **climate crisis** and a deteriorating environment, with further pledges to reduce global temperatures, address air pollution and preserve green spaces as ways to improve mental health.
- New announcements by UN agencies to prioritise mental health and psychosocial support. (MHPSS) in **emergency and conflict settings** are secured. The Minimum Services Package (MSP) for MHPSS in emergencies is launched and implemented across multiple countries. The **Red Cross movement** continues to roll out MHPSS training across its membership.



## Addressing Inequality and Taking a Rights-Based Approach

- The roll out of **WHO QualityRights packages** and guidance in different language will help increase policy commitments that are made on upholding human rights in mental health services in line with the CRPD.
- Awareness on the importance of rights-based mental health-related legislation is increased the **Human Rights Council** adopts a new resolution on mental and human rights in 2022, calling for **CRPD-compliant** mental health-related legislation and detailed guidance; the **OHCHR and WHO** launch this guidance.
- Mental health is integrated/highlighted in terms of vulnerable populations at the 2025 UN **Social Summit** that will focus on the Leave No One Behind agenda.
- Increased momentum and commitments by governments on upholding empowerment, social participation and the **rights of all persons** to good physical and mental health - in line with Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) - building on the momentum of the French ministerial summit through the G20 and G7.
- Sustained action in support of the **campaigns** to end shackling (HRW led), end suicide illegality (UnitedGMH/GMHAN led); and end conversion therapy (Outright International led).

## Better MHPSS for Children, Adolescents and their Caregivers

- WHO continues its work supporting governments on improving programmes for child and adolescent mental; and launches a new Comprehensive Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Conditions in 2023.
- UNICEF continues to roll out its four-year advocacy strategy, until 2025, building on the launch of the **State of the World's Children Report** in October 2021. The advocacy strategy will focus on increased investment across MHPSS across all sectors and settings; scaling up parenting support programmes; mental health support services in the school and community; and changing the public conversation on mental health.
- In 2022, the UNSG hosts the **education summit**; announcements are made to better **integrate MHPSS in education**, addressing the concerns of children and their parents in light of COVID-19.
- In 2023, the UNSG hosts a summit on **Future Generations**: mental health is fully integrated in plans for this summit and highlighted as a key issue for action.

## The Workplace and Mental Health

- WHO and ILO **mental health workplace guidelines and policy brief** will be launched in Q3 2022 and inspire commitments and action including pledges of action by global CEOs and leverages the support of groups such as the Global Business Collaboration for Better Workplace Mental Health.
- An expansion and roll out of workplace mental health support for UN staff continues.
- **Environment, Society and Governance (ESG)** reporting by publicly owned companies increasingly integrates mental health as part of all three areas.

## Harnessing the Power of Digital Technology

- WHO scales up access for Step-by-Step, Self-Help Plus, other digital self-help interventions and e-learning programmes such as e-mhGAP and QualityRights, as well as working to improve national level digital infrastructure.
- The World Economic Forum, together with Salesforce and UNICEF, launches the [UpLink innovation challenge](#) on the topic of Digital Mental Health. It aims to source solutions to leverage digital mental health technologies, with youth as a focus area.
- Technology companies increase the quality of and access to digital self-help interventions; regulations are developed to ensure the use of trusted technology by working with health authorities.

## Improving Knowledge of What Works

- WHO launches a new global report on mental health in Q2 2022 outlining the current situation and the future agenda to help guide the direction of mental health efforts around the world; and a report detailing the impact of COVID-19 on mental health.
- Lancet Commission reports are launched on tackling depression (Q1 2022) and on stigma and discrimination (Q4 2022) to disseminate best practice and encourage reform.

## Improved Mental Health Monitoring and Accountability

- A high level group of stakeholders promotes the annual Countdown Global Mental Health 2030 reports produced from 2022 onward as a means to highlight progress/lack of progress on mental health.



## ROLES KEY STAKEHOLDERS WILL PLAY

<p><b>National Governments</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uphold and implement the recommendations of the WHO Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan (2021-2030) and announce high level political support and additional funding to enable implementation at global and national level.</li> <li>• Build on previous commitments and leverage new opportunities in 2022-2023, to accelerate action on mental health including improving human rights.</li> <li>• Integrate mental health in COVID-19 response and recovery plans and in UHC plans</li> <li>• Include mental health in plans to combat the climate crisis.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Funders (bilateral, multilateral and philanthropic)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase sustainable funding for mental health; support national governments to reach the target of national LMICS governments spending at least 5% and high income countries at least 10% of their health budgets on mental health.</li> <li>• Integrate mental health in COVID-19 response and recovery plans and in UHC plans.</li> <li>• Ensure global health funds and other relevant global initiatives fully integrate MHPSS.</li> </ul>
<p><b>UN Agencies &amp; International Organisations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead and mobilise around World Mental Health Day annually; ensure UN-system wide support to deliver WHO Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2030 and SDG 3; invest in MHPSS in emergency and conflict settings, post-crisis and development programmes.</li> <li>• Integrate mental health in COVID-19 response and recovery plans and in UHC plans</li> <li>• Advocate for increased investment and policy commitments to support. promotive, protective and responsive mental health services across all sectors and settings.</li> <li>• Include people with lived experience in the design and delivery of mental health interventions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Civil society</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and deliver coordinated mobilisation around World Mental Health Day and accompanying call to action.</li> <li>• Advocate for delivering Roadmap goals.</li> <li>• Strengthen organisations of people with psychosocial disabilities as an independent self-representative voice, able to participate in national and global advocacy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Researchers &amp; Academics</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include people with Lived Experience in the design and delivery of mental health research.</li> <li>• Identify and support common approaches and measurement tools.</li> <li>• Invest in new research focused on those mental health conditions with the least effective current treatments.</li> <li>• Intensify efforts to deliver implementation research to scale up quality services and support particularly to those in LMICs and among the most vulnerable groups.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Workplace</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully implement the UN Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy.</li> <li>• Support and implement the new mental health workplace guidelines launched by WHO and ILO in 2022.</li> </ul>



## KEY DATES AND EVENTS 2022 - 2023

During 2022 we will want to promote new knowledge and understanding on mental health to inform policy making and to influence: national SDG plans and reports; G7 and G20 political processes; the outcomes of the UN Education Summit and the mental health ministerial summit; and the Global Fund replenishment.

Date	Event	Location	Activity
Jan 2022	WEF Annual Meeting	Davos	Events on mental health in the workplace
Jan 2022	WHO Executive Board	Geneva	Discuss WHO Comprehensive Alcohol Action Plan
Jan 2022	WHO Executive Board	Geneva	Discuss WHO Intersectoral Action Plan on Epilepsy and other Neurological Conditions
Feb 2022	Lancet	Global	New Lancet Commission report on depression and how to address it
May 2022	WHO	Global	Launch of the World Mental Health Report
May 2022	WHO	Global	Mental Health Action Day <a href="http://www.mentalhealthactionday.org">www.mentalhealthactionday.org</a>
May 2022	World Health Assembly	Geneva	Potential endorsement of WHO Global Alcohol Action Plan
May 2022	World Health Assembly	Geneva	Potential endorsement of WHO Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and other Neurological Conditions
June 2022	G7 Summit	Germany	TBC G7 includes mental health in its meetings and commitments
July 2022	UN High Level Forum	New York	Over 40 countries present SDGs Voluntary National Reviews
July 2022	WHO	Global	Expected Launch of the WHO Technical Guidance on Suicide Decriminalisation
Q3	WHO & ILO	Global	Launch of new WHO and ILO workplace mental health guidelines
Sept 2022	UN Education Summit	New York	UN Education Summit includes action on mental health
Oct 2022	Lancet	Global	New Lancet Commission report on mental health and stigma, and how to address it
Oct 2022	World Mental Health Day	Global	Theme TBC – global celebration of year of action; additional commitments made especially at country level
Oct 2022	Mental Health Ministerial Meeting	Rome/Italy	Government of Italy to host; theme TBA

Date	Event	Location	Activity
Nov 2022	COP 27	Egypt	UNFCCC COP 27 Climate Change discussions
Nov 2022	Global Fund Replenishment	USA	Donor commitments in support of the new GF strategy (that integrates mental health) on HIV, TB and Malaria
Dec 2022	UNICEF	Global	UNICEF Child and Youth Forum includes mental health as focus topic
Dec 2022	UHC day	Global	Announcements of integration of mental health in UHC plans TBC
Dec 2022	Human Rights Day	Global	Action on mental health and HR TBC
Dec 2022	G20 Heads of State and Govts Summit	Indonesia	TBC G20 includes mental health in its meetings and commitments

During 2023 we will want to promote greater action on mental health for young people; better integration of mental health in UHC; and accelerated momentum towards the achievement of the SDGs. Key moments include: the UN Summit on the Future Generation; the UN High Level meeting on UHC; the UN SDG summit; and the mental health ministerial summit.

Date	Event	Location	Activity
Jan 2023	WEF Annual Meeting	Davos	Announcements on mental health in the workplace; support of greater action on mental health - business, philanthropy
Jan 2023	WHO Executive Board	Geneva	Mental health specific actions TBC
May 2023	MTV	Global	Mental Health Action Day
May 2023	World Health Assembly	Geneva	Mental health specific actions TBC
Sept 2023	UN General Assembly	New York	Future Generations Summit includes child and youth mental health
Sept 2023	UN General Assembly	New York	SDGs Summit reviews global and national progress including on mental health
Sept 2023	UN General Assembly	New York	High level meeting on Universal Health Coverage
Oct 2023	World Mental Health Day	Global	Theme TBC – global celebration of year of action; additional commitments made especially at country level
Oct 2023	Mental Health Ministerial Meeting	TBC	TBC host; theme
Nov 2023	COP	UAE	UNFCCC COP 28
Dec 2023	UNICEF	Global	UNICEF Child and Youth Forum includes mental health as focus topic
Dec 2023	UHC day		Announcements of integration of mental health in UHC plans
Dec 2023	Human Rights Day	Global	Action on mental health and HR

**Note:** a more detailed timetable of all key events and political processes is also being developed and will be kept updated by the Global Mental Health Action Network (GMHAN).



## ANNEX: 2018-2021 PROGRESS ON GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH

### Political commitments include:

- The 2018 High-Level Meeting on Noncommunicable Diseases included for the first time substantial language on mental health in its Political Declaration at the UN General Assembly (UNGA); and subsequently a new Multi-Trust Fund was established for NCDs and Mental Health.
- The UN System Workplace Strategy on Mental Health and Well-being was launched in 2019.
- The 2019 High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) for the first time included substantial language on mental health in its Political Declaration.
- A 2019 resolution on Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs of People Affected by Emergencies was adopted by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (RCRC).
- 2020-21, recognition of the need to integrate mental health in the response to, and recovery from COVID-19 was part of WHO resolutions, a UNSG paper backed by member states and multiple reports and surveys.
- The 2021 World Health Assembly approved WHO's Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2021-2030; and record numbers of ministers spoke in favour of greater action on mental health.
- New promises of action on mental health from national governments particularly in response to COVID-19, and in international declarations e.g. G20 (2021).
- Agreement to integrate mental health in the future strategy of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.
- Suicide decriminalised in Cayman Islands, Singapore and the UAE.

### Wider stakeholders were galvanised through:

- Sustained efforts led by the Dutch government to secure action on MHPSS in emergencies including through the establishment of the Surge Support mechanism to support early coordination.
- A focus for children's and young people's mental health including the 2021 UNICEF State of the World's Children Report; and the Wellcome Active Ingredients work.
- Increased focus on rights: the theme for the 2021 French ministerial summit; the launch of the WHO Guidance on person-centred and rights-based community mental health services.
- Several new workplace mental health initiatives including the Global Business Collaboration for Better Workplace Mental Health and reports by Wellcome.
- Multiple reports to inform knowledge and understanding of better ways to prevent, diagnose and treat anxiety and depression by Wellcome.
- An International Alliance of Mental Health Research Funders (IAMHRF) report on mental health research funding and the case for further investment.
- Launch of Countdown Global Mental Health 2030 by WHO, UNICEF, Lancet, Harvard, UnitedGMH and the Global Mental Health Peer Network - a global, independent monitoring mechanism.
- A growing Global Mental Health Action Network: now over 1580 members from over 110 countries.



A hand is shown in silhouette, reaching out from the left side of the frame. The background is a gradient of purple and blue, with a bright light source on the left creating a lens flare effect. The hand is positioned as if offering support or reaching for help.

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