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GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY ROADMAP

2023-2024

UNITED
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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 2023-2024 sets out clear objectives and opportunities that will help achieve this. It is the product of United for Global Mental Health (UnitedGMH), on behalf of the Global Mental Health Action Network (GMHAN) 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. Five years of foundational work and consolidation by the global mental health community in 2018-2022 have delivered notable progress (see boxes below).

In the past 2 years, partly due to the impact of COVID-19, the level of discussion on mental health has increased in many countries. However, 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 2023 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. Recent progress is detailed in the box below.

OVERALL AIMS FOR THE GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY 2020-2030

1. Global and National Policy Reform

- The promotion of mental health by key **global institutions and organisations**, including UN agencies, the World Bank Group and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.
- 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.
- Greater prioritisation of **child and youth mental health** in policies and financing nationally and internationally.

- Prioritisation of MHPSS in **emergency, migration and conflict settings** and integrated into peacebuilding interventions.
- Prioritisation 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**, especially in the preparations for, and the deliverables of, the UN High-Level Meeting on UHC in September 2023.
- A parity between **mental health and other Non-Communicable Disease** issues in key discussions on the topics and in NCD fora e.g.
- 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 the Highest Attainable Level of 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 and opposed to further **developments in legislation, policy and programmes** that are contrary to rights-based approaches.
- **Reduction in mental health stigma and discrimination** in all settings and in law including: **decriminalisation of suicide**; and 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.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Over the past 5 years (2018-2022) 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, COVID-19, 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. 2023 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 2023-2024:

While citizens will demand more mental health support, 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. Many countries are experiencing significant economic challenges due to a combination of factors, and this means the very poorest in society are likely to fall further behind economically and this is likely to negatively impact mental health. Moreover, LMICs are among those most impacted by a combination of economic, security and environmental challenges, 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 in 2023-2024 and beyond. The 2023 UN SDGs Summit can help highlight progress (or lack of progress) towards the mental health related SDGs and is a moment to press for greater action. The process leading up to, and the discussions at, the UN High Level Meeting on UHC will be critically important to redressing the balance between physical and mental health in terms of political prioritisation, reforms and funding. Moreover in 2023 there are also important moments to advance action on child, youth and caregiver mental health including Women Deliver and the Global Forum for Adolescents. And it is anticipated that the Call to Action

organised by the Mexican Government as a follow up to the discussion at the UN Security Council on MHPSS will lead to a UN Resolution on Mental Health which could be a significant opportunity to advance political attention for mental health. At a regional level, the European Commission is scheduled to launch a new mental health initiative in 2023.

Further key moments in 2024 include the Summit of the Future where long term concerns such as security, the environment and the needs of young people will be discussed. Looking forward, the NCDs Global Compact (agreed April 2022) commits to accelerating action on mental health through a series of events and activities and the 2025 UN Social Summit is an event to work towards to help drive further action, particularly in LMICs among the most marginalised communities. Meanwhile, on the environment, COP28 in UAE and COP29, and wider dialogues on climate change, are increasingly including mental health. Such summits, that encourage all governments to participate, are opportunities to leverage momentum.

In addition, there are opportunities in 2023-24 to leverage international assistance. Most notably through: the Global Fund, the Global Financing Facility (GFF), and the World Bank Group; investment in UHC and in primary health; linking mental health to the response to, and recovery from, COVID-19 and other emergencies (including humanitarian responses); 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 to amend outdated laws and policies, and ensure fully funded and implemented mental health programmes.

THE OUTCOMES - WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN 2023-24

Political, Policy and Funding Commitments

- Targets of the **WHO Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan (2021-2030)** and the NCDs Global Compact 2020-2030 garner high level political support and additional funding. This support will reflect the better integration of mental health in **UHC** plans that will be discussed at the UN High-Level Meeting on UHC in September 2023; **COVID-19** national and international level response, recovery and pandemic preparedness 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 low- and middle-income countries (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**, the **GFF**, and the NCDs and Mental Health **Trust Fund**. **Mental health** financing is included in discussions at the 2023 G7, G20, and replenishments of the GF and GFF.
- From 2022 - 2023 governments produce their **SDG review reports** for presentation at a **UN SDG 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 including during the health day at COP 28.
- New announcements by UN agencies to prioritise mental health and psychosocial support. (MHPSS) in **emergency and conflict settings** are secured through work by the Government of Mexico and others at the UN. The Call to Action organised by the Mexican Government as a follow up to the discussion at the UN Security Council on MHPSS leads to a **UN Resolution on Mental Health**.

Addressing Inequality and Taking A Rights-Based Approach

- Awareness on the importance of rights-based mental health-related legislation is increased when WHO and OHCHR launch guidance in 2023 on **CRPD-compliant** mental health-related legislation.
- 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.
- Sustained action is achieved in support of the **campaigns** to end shackling (HRW led), end suicide illegality (IASP/UnitedGMH); and end conversion therapy (Outright International led).



Better Mental Health for Children, Adolescents and their Caregivers

- 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.
- **Women Deliver 2023** features mental health as a key issue in the programme and policy announcements.
- The 2023 **Global Forum for Adolescents** advances political commitments and actions for mental health and wellbeing from all those participating.
- In 2024, the UN Secretary General hosts a **Futures Summit**: mental health is fully integrated in plans for this summit and highlighted as a key issue for action by all those participating.

The Workplace and Mental Health

- An expansion and roll out of **workplace mental health** support for all citizens including UN staff and UN peacekeepers 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 Self-Help Plus, releases [Step-by-Step and a guided self-help manual](#) for use with step-by-step and doing what matters in times of stress
- WHO digital self-help interventions and e-learning programmes such as e-mhGAP and QualityRights continue to be promoted.
- 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

- Lancet Commission Reports are launched on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing (2023); and a follow up report on Ending Stigma and Discrimination in Mental Health (2023).
- The McKinsey Health Initiative launches an assessment that enables employers to measure their approach to employee mental health and well-being, track progress, and contribute to open access data to improve broader learning and insights.
- The Wellcome Trust has two mental health awards open, on effective treatments for anxiety and depression (deadline February 2023), and integrating sleep and circadian science into our understanding and treatment of anxiety, depression and psychosis (deadline June 2023). Future awards will include developmental pathways, unlocking the potential of neuroscience, and new and improved digital technology, all with regards to anxiety, depression, and psychosis.

Improved Mental Health Monitoring and Accountability

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

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ROLES KEY STAKEHOLDERS WILL PLAY

National Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Support the Implementation Road Map 2023-2030 for the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013-2030. Implement the recommendations of the WHO Executive Board paper, "Recommendations on how to strengthen the design and implementation of policies, including those for resilient health systems and health services and infrastructure, to treat people living with noncommunicable diseases and to prevent and control their risk factors in humanitarian emergencies" Build on previous commitments and leverage new opportunities in 2023-2024, to accelerate action on mental health including improving human rights. Integrate mental health in COVID-19 response and recovery plans and in UHC plans. Include mental health in plans to combat the climate crisis.
Funders (bilateral, multilateral and philanthropic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Integrate mental health in COVID-19 response and recovery plans and in UHC plans. Ensure global health funds and other relevant global initiatives fully integrate MHPSS.
UN Agencies & International Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Integrate mental health in COVID-19 response and recovery plans and in UHC plans. Deliver the Implementation Road Map 2023-2030 for the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013-2030. Advocate for increased investment and policy commitments to support, promotive, protective and responsive mental health services across all sectors and settings. Include people with lived experience in the design and delivery of mental health interventions.
Civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver coordinated mobilisation around World Mental Health Day and accompanying call to action. Advocate for delivering Roadmap goals. Strengthen organisations of people with psychosocial disabilities as an independent self-representative voice, able to participate in national and global advocacy.
Researchers & Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include people with Lived Experience in the design and delivery of mental health research. Identify and support common approaches and measurement tools. Invest in new research focused on those mental health conditions with the least effective current treatments. Intensify efforts to deliver implementation research to scale up quality services and support particularly to those in LMICs and among the most vulnerable groups.
Workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully implement the UN Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy. Support and implement the WHO Mental Health Workplace guidelines.

KEY DATES AND EVENTS 2023 - 2024

During 2023 we will 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 Adolescent Wellbeing Summit; 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	SIDS Meeting	Barbados	NCDs and Mental Health meeting of Small Island Developing States
Jan 2023	WHO Executive Board	Geneva	Mental health specific actions TBC
Jan 2023	World Bank	Global	Meeting on investment in mental health hosted by the World Bank
May 2023	MTV	Global	Mental Health Action Day
May 2023	World Health Assembly	Geneva	Mental health specific actions TBC; likely to be integrated in discussions UHC
June 2023	G7 Summit	Japan	G7 includes mental health in its final documentation especially in regard to integration with UHC
July 2023	Women Deliver	Rwanda	Maternal mental health (especially adolescent mothers) highlighted
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 fully integrates mental health
Oct 2023	World Mental Health Day	Global	Theme TBC – global celebration of year of action; additional commitments made especially at country level
Oct 2023	Global Adolescent Forum	Virtual	Commitments are made for mental health
Oct 2023	Mental Health Ministerial Meeting	TBC	Argentina host; theme TBC
Oct 2024	G20 Heads of State and Govts Summit	India	G20 includes mental health in its meetings and commitments
Nov 2023	COP	UAE	UNFCCC COP 28 mental health is included in discussions
Dec 2023	International Day of Persons with Disabilities	Global	Theme TBC – global celebration of year of action; additional commitments made especially at country level
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

KEY DATES AND EVENTS 2023 - 2024

During 2024 we will want to ensure mental health is truly integrated in discussions on climate change; and is a key part of the discussion of the Futures Summit as the international community charts its direction for the coming decades.

Date	Event	Location	Activity
Jan 2024	WEF Annual Meeting	Davos	Events on mental health in the workplace
Jan 2024	WHO Executive Board	Geneva	Discuss WHO NCDs
May 2024	MTV	Global	Mental Health Action Day www.mentalhealthactionday.org
May 2024	World Health Assembly	Geneva	Agenda item on Mental Health (TBC)
June	G7 Summit		G7 includes mental health in its final documentation
Sept 2024	Futures Summit	New York	Mental Health included in discussion and commitments
Oct 2024	World Mental Health Day	Global	Theme TBC
Oct 2024	Mental Health Ministerial Meeting		Government to host TBC
October 2024	G20 Heads of State and Govts Summit		G20 includes mental health in its meetings and commitments
Nov 2024	COP		UNFCCC COP Climate Change discussions
Dec 2024	International Day of Persons with Disabilities	Global	Theme TBC – global celebration of year of action; additional commitments made especially at country level
Dec 2024	UNICEF	Global	UNICEF Child and Youth Forum includes mental health as focus topic
Dec 2024	UHC day	Global	Announcements of integration of mental health in UHC plans TBC
Dec 2024	Human Rights Day	Global	Action on mental health and HR TBC

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).

“ 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 including during the health day at COP 28. ”

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ANNEX: 2018-2022 PROGRESS ON GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH

Global and National Policy Reform

- 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 2019 World Health Assembly approved an extension to the **WHO's Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2030**; in 2021 updated annexes were approved; and in 2021 and 2022 record numbers of ministers spoke in favour of greater action on mental health.
- A new **Global Compact on NCDs including mental health** was launched in 2022 along with a Global Heads of State and Government Group on NCDs to help ensure the compact is delivered.
- New promises of action on mental health from national governments particularly in response to COVID-19, and in international declarations **e.g. G20 (2021) and G7 (2022)**. For example, the 2022 G7 Leaders Communique made a strong commitment to improving mental health services for all.
- Agreement to integrate mental health in the 2023-2028 strategy of the **Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria**.
- Recommendations from a 2022 report of the Conference on the Future of Europe for development of an **EU Action Plan on mental health** to provide long term **Mental Health Strategy**, and the setting up of a dedicated **European Year of Mental Health**.
- In 2022, the UNSG hosted the **education summit**; and UNICEF and WHO made announcements on how best to **integrate MHPSS in education**.
- WHO launched a **policy briefing on mental health and climate change** in 2022 to help guide future policy and action. For the first time, prominent inclusion of mental health in an **IPCC report** (April 2022): noting "climate change is expected to have adverse impacts on well-being and to further threaten mental health." Growing presence of mental health advocates at **COP meetings** in 2021 and 2022.

Response to Emergencies

- 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.
- **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; and launch of the MISP.

- In 2022, a **session of the UN Security Council** devoted to Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in emergencies was held for the first time; and the UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2668 (2022) on mental health and psychosocial support for UN peace operations personnel.

Integration of Mental Health in Universal Health Coverage

- The 2019 High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) for the first time included substantial language on mental health in its Political Declaration.

Uphold the Rights of All Persons to the Highest Attainable Level of Mental Health:

- Suicide decriminalised in Cayman Islands, Guyana, Singapore, the UAE and Pakistan in 2021 and 2022.
- 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 and public access to the WHO Quality Rights Training in multiple languages.
- **Guidelines on deinstitutionalisation** were adopted by the Committee of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2022 further improving policy and practice.
- Awareness on the importance of rights-based mental health-related legislation was increased when the **Human Rights Council** adopted a new resolution on mental and human rights in 2021, calling for **CRPD-compliant** mental health-related legislation and detailed guidance; the **OHCHR and WHO** will produce and launch this guidance in 2023.

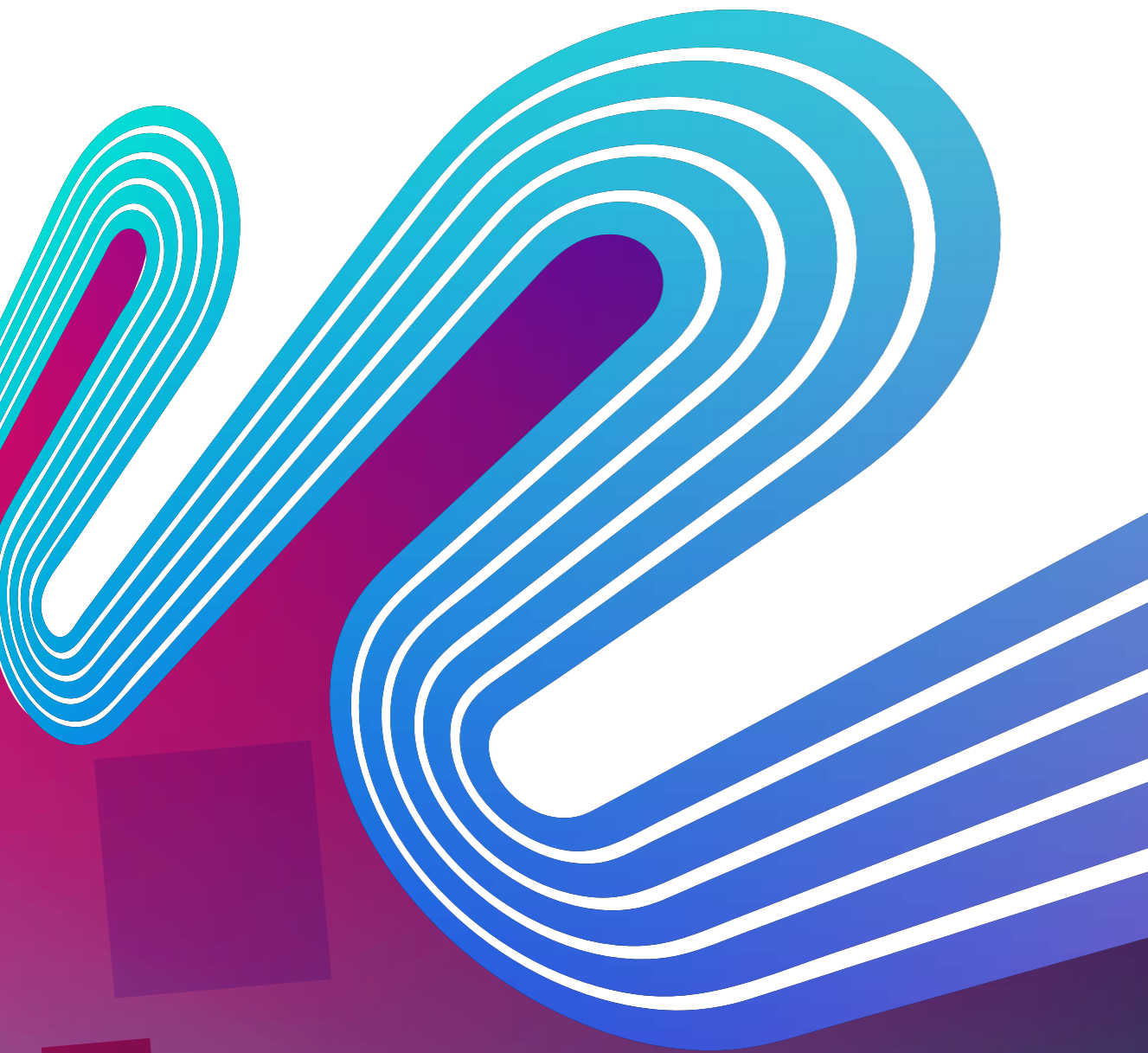
Strengthened Monitoring and Accountability

- 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.

Development and Dissemination of Best Practice

- The **WHO World Mental Health Report 2022** was launched 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.
- UNICEF launched the **2021 UNICEF State of the World's Children Report** with a focus on mental health and wellbeing; and UNICEF continued to roll out its four-year advocacy strategy.
- Large funders including Mackenzie Scott, the Wellcome Trust, Fondation Botnar (Being Initiative), the Zurich Foundation and the Elton John AIDS Foundation, announced a number of grant calls and discussions targeted at improving **mental health and especially youth mental health**.
- 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 in 2020 of the Global Business Collaboration for Better Workplace Mental Health; new reports by Wellcome; and launch of the WHO **mental health workplace guidelines and policy brief** in 2022. Together these have help inspired commitments and action including pledges of action by global CEOs.
- **Lancet Commission reports** were launched on tackling depression (Q1 2022) and on stigma and discrimination (Q4 2022) to disseminate best practice and encourage reform.



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