# NO HEALTH WITHOUT MENTAL HEALTH





E





## **INTRODUCTION: THE STATE OF GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH**

Since United for Global Mental Health was launched in 2018, mental health has become a greater political and public priority.

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health rose sharply up the political agenda as governments around the world came under increasing pressure to respond to rapidly growing mental health needs. A rising tide of conflict, mass displacement and environmental disasters have further heightened the necessity for a response.

Research from The Wellcome Trust shows 92% of people around of living with mental health conditions continue to experience high rates of stigma and discrimination, especially in Africa, Latin and support has not risen in line with political attention or the

the world consider mental health as important or more important than physical health for overall wellbeing. However, people at risk America and Asia. And investment in mental ill-health prevention level of need.







While the pandemic has generated interest in and concern for mental health, it has also revealed historical under-investment in mental health services. Countries must act urgently to ensure that mental health support is available to all.

Dévora Kestel, Director of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Use at the WHO



Good mental health is absolutely fundamental to overall health and wellbeing.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General





## **SECTION 1: OUR GOALS**

United for Global Mental Health believes that everyone, everywhere, should have someone to turn to when they need support with their mental health.

In our 2021 - 2023 strategy, we wanted to ensure that:

- everyone's right to enjoy the highest attainable level of mental health is upheld
- guality, comprehensive and person-centred mental health services are • accessible for all
- mental health systems can get the financial resources they need
- stigma and discrimination is reduced

#### **People power**

We need people and governments to work collaboratively to improve mental health. But that can only happen through the collective efforts of a whole range of people and organisations.

That's why we work with partners – from national governments, donor agencies, academia and global organisations such as the WHO and the UN to grassroots groups and people with lived experience of mental ill-health – bringing them together to collectively advocate for national and global change.

Our Impact in 2023 have been far-reaching and profound. Together we have ensured **people with lived experience**, so often ignored, are heard and have influence. We have helped equip our partners with **the tools**, **guidance**, **funding** and connections they need to make an impact at the global level. And we've secured some **big political wins** at the highest levels of global and national decision-making.



#### Our focus in 2023

In 2023, to help achieve greater political and financial support for mental health, we focused on:

- ending punishment for suicidal behaviour so that people can reach out for help when they need it most
- better integration of mental health in national health systems
- greater prioritisation of young people's mental health by governments and donors through our work with the Being Initiative
- winning the argument that mental health is a key part of the fight for climate justice

All of the accomplishments you'll read about in this report are a step on the journey towards good mental health for all.

Around the world, government funding for mental health is still incredibly low, and stigma and discrimination stops people from accessing the care they need. But the tide is turning. This year has shown the world is listening to our call for action. Mental health is now being taken seriously at the highest levels: from the UN General Assembly high-level meetings on health, to discussions on addressing the impact of climate change at COP28. And 2023 is the year when we saw notable progress at national level, helping improve the lives of millions.

Sarah Kline, CEO, UnitedGMH





## SECTION 2: BIG POLITICAL WINS

In 2023, United for Global Mental Health and our partners pushed for big global changes in mental health policy and legislation – and scored some remarkable wins.



A sign for a suicide prevention hotine on the pede

#### Suicide decriminalisation: SUICIDE IS NOT A CRIME

25 countries treat suicide as a crime. In doing so, they add to the stigma surrounding mental ill-health and deprive those who need support.

#### **BREAKTHROUGH 2023:**

In the space of just a year national campaigners have secured the decriminalisation of suicide in four countries: Pakistan, <u>Ghana</u>, Guyana and Malaysia. UnitedGMH is very proud to have supported these efforts, particularly in Pakistan and Ghana. Now anyone in these countries who is driven to contemplate suicide can legally seek help.

66

Attempted suicide is not a crime. It is a mental ailment and it should be treated accordingly.

Pakistan Senator, Shahadat Awan

From South America to South Asia, and from Africa to Southeast Asia, positive examples hold the potential to inspire others. Suicide is not a crime but a human rights and public health concern.

Sarah Kline, UGMH chief executive, writing in <u>Al Jazeera</u>





#### 25 COUNTRIES STILL TREAT SUICIDE AS A CRIME

## SAFE TO OPEN UP

Mimie Rahman didn't ask for help after attempting suicide about ten years ago. Suicide was a criminal offence in Malaysia, where Mimie lives, and punishable by up to a year in prison.

## "I didn't know where to look for help," she says.

Now suicide is no longer a crime in Malaysia, people who are considering suicide – like Mimie did – will be able to get the help they need.

#### **700,000 DEATHS** BY SUICIDE EVERY YEAR 77% IN LMICS

## **309 MILLION**

PEOPLE NOW LIVING UNDER NEW RIGHTS-BASED LAWS DUE TO SUICIDE BEING DECRIMINALISED IN PAKISTAN, GHANA, GUYANA, MALAYSIA IN 2023



## Mental health on the global health agenda: NO HEALTH WITHOUT MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health and physical health are closely interlinked – improving mental health tends to improve physical health. For example, integrating mental health into HIV and TB programmes could <u>reduce HIV and TB</u> <u>infections by up to 17 and 20% respectively.</u>

That's why, in 2023, we pushed to put mental health on the wider global health agenda, with some huge breakthroughs:

#### **BREAKTHROUGH 2023:**

Our advocacy saw mental health included comprehensively for the first time in three key UN General Assembly declarations on:

- Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response (PPPR)
- Tuberculosis (TB)
- Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

This was a landmark moment for mental health – and the *Lancet Psychiatry* identified United for Global Mental Health as being instrumental in making it happen. As part of the push for action, we met with over 50 national governments, organised events in Geneva and New York, presented statements at UN multi-stakeholder hearings and contributed to the policy recommendations from civil society coalitions.

During a trio of UN meetings, mental health felt like an unofficial theme. The commitments made by all 193 UN member states to include mental health in Universal Health Coverage, TB and PPPR have profound implications for millions of people with mental and physical health conditions across the planet. Our next step is to work with national partners to make sure their commitments are implemented.

During the 78th UN General Assembly in New York City in September, mental health was included in all three political statements from the health high-level meetings: on universal health coverage; pandemic prevention, preparation, and response; and tuberculosis. The addition of two small words, 'and mental', represents a great achievement for organisations such as United for Global Mental Health. Lancet Psychiatry

### Who the declarations cover



#### **BREAKTHROUGH 2023:**

For the first time ever, the Global Fund is now incorporating mental health into its five-year strategy to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria – thanks to the advocacy work of United for Global Mental Health alongside governments, international agencies and civil society organisations (CSOs).

This is a huge win: by integrating mental health into the global response to fight HIV and TB, we have calculated HIV infections could be reduced by 10-17%, and TB cases by 13-20%. We are tracking progress to ensure additional funding really does lead to lives saved.

Building on our success, United for Global Mental Health established an interagency working group to coordinate the work of UN agencies and bilateral donors. This group is dedicated to helping national governments,

# We know that mental health is inextricably entwined with the fight against these infectious diseases [HIV, TB and malaria]... We need to ensure we recognise mental health is indispensable to good health.

Peter Sands, Executive Director, The Global Fund

#### **BREAKTHROUGH 2023:**

United for Global Mental Health and our partners propelled mental health higher up the national agenda in 2023, inspiring crucial changes in legislation, policy and service provision in Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Liberia.

**Sierra Leone** invited us to contribute to shaping legislation and policy as part of an official consultation process. As a result, the government is working on replacing the 1902 Lunacy Act with a mental health bill in line with modern international standards, which is expected to pass soon. service providers, and CSOs integrate mental health into their respective national Global Fund HIV and TB investments. Thanks to the work of this interagency working group, several national programmes applied to the Global Fund to incorporate mental health into HIV and/or TB programmes. This has the potential to mobilise substantial funds for global mental health.

All told in 2023, we worked in partnership with:

- national organisations in 14 countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, Mongolia, Mali, Ghana, Pakistan, Mozambique, Nigeria, Côte' d'Ivoire, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of Congo
- two regional networks: the Asia Pacific
  Council of AIDS Service Organisation and
  the African Constituency Bureau
- a community hub: the Global Fund Advocacy Network TB-Affected Community Hub, supported by the Stop TB Partnership.

**Nigeria** asked us to provide input into its revised national mental health policy, which is being finalised by the country's Ministry of Health. This policy will be an update on the 2013 National Policy for Mental Health Service Delivery.

Liberia: We helped to finance and organise consultations between Liberians with lived experience of mental ill-health and the country's Ministry of Health. Their input has informed government moves to include mental health in UHC reforms.





## Climate change and mental health: WAKING UP TO THE CONNECTION

Climate change makes people's mental health worse. It exacerbates existing mental health problems and increases the risk of new ones. We highlighted this underreported connection in a <u>series of</u> <u>briefings in 2023</u>, organised the first climate and mental health session at the <u>mental</u> <u>health ministerial summit</u>, and advocated for the inclusion of mental health in the outcome document from the first COP climate and health day.

#### **BREAKTHROUGH:**

At COP28 - for the first time ever - a ministerial declaration on <u>climate and</u> <u>health</u> with a reference to mental health and psychosocial wellbeing was endorsed by more than 140 countries. Mental health was also featured in 14 of 55 national statements during the ministerial meeting on climate and health. It is the first time mental health and climate have been talked about so prominently on the global stage, thanks to the work of United for Global Mental Health and our partners.

NITED OR LOBAL ENTAL



## SECTION 3: POWER TO OUR PARTNERS

United for Global Mental Health is all about bringing the right people together, providing them with the best tools, funding and guidance, and giving them the platform they need to make an impact. Here are just some of our successes in 2023.

#### DESIGNING TOOLS A one-stop-shop <u>technical</u> <u>toolbox</u>

With our partners in the interagency working group, we co-developed new documents as part of a technical toolbox for Global Fund staff, which included:

- an e-learning module
- a WHO document on the relationships between TB and mental health
- case studies from national partners
- information about integrating mental health into HIV and TB services.

The toolbox is a one-stop shop of hard evidence on the two-way relationship between HIV, TB and mental health, helping national partners to develop their own funding proposals and programme design.

#### We supported:

**Basic Needs Ghana** to successfully apply for a €900,000 grant from 'Le Initiative France' to provide technical assistance for Global Fund programmes.

**The Mongolian Anti-TB Coalition** to feed into the Mongolian government's '95-95-95 Strategy to End HIV in Mongolia'. As a result, the government's strategy included 40 mentions of mental health and a dedicated 'mental health pillar'.

#### Filling the data void

Having comprehensive, good-quality data on mental health is essential to inform decisionmaking, drive policy change, and make the case for increased investment. But there are huge gaps in the data on mental health, especially in lowand middle-income countries.



#### Data dashboard

In 2023, <u>Countdown Global Mental Health 2030</u> – of which we're a founding partner – launched a **global data collection tool** that provides a coherent set of indicators for measuring progress on mental health. The Countdown's interactive dashboard makes the latest mental health data accessible and shows the total number of missing data points for each country.

Having incubated the Countdown initiative with a range of partners, we passed the responsibility for hosting the dashboard on to UNICEF in 2023.

#### The uses of data

During a lively, well-attended session on data advocacy at the recent <u>Global Mental Health Action</u> <u>Network (the Action Network) Annual Meeting in</u> <u>Cape Town</u>, we heard powerful examples of how participants have used data in their advocacy to:

- make sure young people are involved in mental health policy reform in the Caribbean
- ensure a new Mental Health Act was passed in Nigeria
- decriminalise suicide in Ghana.

#### PROVIDING EXPERT GUIDANCE & ANALYSIS

#### How to engage young people

In August 2023, we published Global Mental Health Action Network's new <u>Effective Youth</u> <u>Engagement Guidelines</u>, co-created with members of the Action Network Child and Youth Working Group. They're designed to give our national partners the knowledge and skills

# Mental health data & where to find it

To help advocates find and use mental health data in their work, United for Global Mental Health published <u>a new policy brief on mental health data</u> and where to find it. The policy brief summarises and signposts the main sources of data relevant to mental health. It covers the data available from both official sources (governments and intergovernmental organisations such as the UN) and unofficial sources (e.g. the private sector, CSOs and citizen-generated data). It outlines the pros and cons of different datasets, identifies current data gaps and makes recommendations for action.

In December 2023, United for Global Mental Health was featured in an <u>article about the importance of</u> <u>data for African policy making on mental health</u>. Our Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer, Aviwe Funani, was quoted as saying:

"Reliable data on mental health in Africa would be very valuable for us as an organisation to be able to increase the credibility of our advocacy processes when we speak to stakeholders. It also helps us increase the production of documents and recommendations that can help policymakers make decisions around mental health."

to work in a meaningful way with children and young people with lived experience, especially when they are accessing mental health support.

We shared the guidelines with the **African Union** (AU) office of the Youth Envoy, to feed into a youth mental health toolkit they are creating, designed to support national organisations with youth engagement within the Africa Region and AU member states.



#### Guidelines on suicide prevention Finding a \$200bn funding gap

We worked with the WHO to develop guidelines on the prevention and decriminalisation of suicide. Our recommendations included:

- developing national suicide prevention strategies
- budgeting for post-decriminalisation training for first-line responders
- how to formulate new laws and policies that promote quality care and the rights of people with mental health conditions and psychosocial disabilities.

The guidelines on decriminalising suicide and updating mental health legislation have been disseminated to national partners for use in their advocacy. While the guidelines for the media on suicide prevention were the subject several media roundtables we organised to encourage behaviour change. In 2024, we will push for the practical application of these guidelines with national governments. On World Mental Health Day, United for Global Mental Health released a report revealing that the annual total finance gap for mental health systems across the world is at least \$200 billion.

We called on governments and international agencies to invest more in mental health – on the back of aid expenditure for mental health dropping by a third between 2018 and 2021 – and for a universally agreed definition of development assistance for mental health.

## WHO guidance on TB and mental health

In collaboration with the interagency working group, we helped the WHO develop groundbreaking <u>guidance</u> and an e-learning tool to support healthcare professionals to integrate mental health into TB prevention and care, and hosted an 'EndTB' webinar to launch it. This marked an important step towards making the integration of mental health in TB prevention and care a reality.

#### **BRINGING THE RIGHT PEOPLE TOGETHER**

Our aims are hugely ambitious. Only by bringing together everyone from the most influential global players to local grassroots organisations to people with lived experience will they be achieved. Global Mental Health Action Network



**Our Global Mental Health Action Network** (Action Network) is the world's largest global mental health network. Its membership increased from 2,300 members in 131 countries at the end of 2022 to more than 3,400 members in 147 countries at the end of 2023 – a 48% rise.

In June, we hosted the Action Network annual meeting in Cape Town – a venue chosen to make it easier for mental health advocates and champions from the global south to attend. It was attended in person by 161 participants from 39 countries and online by a further 314 participants from 63 countries – making it one of the largest-ever gatherings of civil society stakeholders working on advocacy for mental health.

Young people and people with lived experience were strongly represented. United for Global Mental Health also secured funding to sponsor 50 participants from low- and middle-income countries.

48% increase in members



Action Network working groups launched the following policy briefs and guidelines during 2023:

- <u>Key asks on integrating mental health into</u> <u>Universal Health Coverage</u>
- New Guidelines: Effective Youth Engagement Practices
- <u>Policy briefs</u> on the environment and mental health and climate change and mental health.

**Born this Way:** We hosted roundtables with Cynthia Germanotta, President of the <u>Born</u>. this Way Foundation – a mental health charity for young people – and a WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Mental Health. We brought together young mental health advocates to propose national solutions to the youth mental health crisis, several of whom are now on Born this Way's global youth advisory board. Their work has been highlighted by Cynthia in her international communications.





## **SECTION 4: LOUDER VOICES**

People with lived experience of mental health conditions are the real experts. It's their firsthand understanding that can and should inform how the world responds to the mental health challenges we face. Too often, though, their voices go unheard and their insight is lost.

In 2023, we created opportunities for people who've lived through and with mental ill-health to speak to the highest levels of power.

#### MENTAL HEALTH **CHAMPIONS** "Bring the youth into making decisions" Judah Njoroge

Judah Njoroge, a youth mental health advocate from Kenya, pictured right, took part in a Mental Health for All side event with Fondation Botnar and the Clinton Global Initiative 2023 at the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

"If you bring the youth into making the decisions," Judah said, "then they are able to change the system from Judah spoke alongside heads of state, senior within. They can directly take politicians and UN agencies at a mental health event co-organised by the WHO, UNICEF, United part in developing solutions for Global Mental Health and the Kingdoms that work for them." of Belgium and Bhutan during the high-level





week of the UN General Assembly. He talked of the collective responsibility to ensure young people are supported to reach their right to the highest attainable level of mental health.





#### Esther: "It's important we listen to young mothers"

At the Women Deliver Conference, in Kigali, Rwanda, Esther Mamba, pictured above right, spoke on a panel organised by United for Global Mental Health about why young mothers' mental health matters. Representing Mothers 2 Mothers (M2M) South Africa - which creates space for young mothers to talk about the problems they face and find solutions -Esther emphasised the need to incorporate mental health into sexual reproductive health programmes.

### "It's important that we recognise young mothers, and we need to listen to what they have to say"

she explained.





Working with Foundation Botnar and Grand Challenges Canada, we made sure young people with lived experience of mental illhealth and young mothers were speakers at the Women Deliver side-event on adolescent mothers' mental health. They highlighted the needs of young mothers and how they can best be supported.

#### Pierre: "A failure to protect the environment is a commitment to violating human rights"

United for Global Mental Health invited Pierre Cooke Jr, pictured left, to speak at the Global Mental Health Ministerial Summit workshop we organised on the environment and mental health. As someone with lived experience, Pierre shared his unique insights into the impact of environmental changes on mental health in Barbados and discussed possible collective solutions.

## SUPPORTING PARTNER **ADVOCACY**

We help to supercharge our partners' campaigns, offering opportunities for connection and advocacy expertise. Here are some of the 2023 campaign highlights.

#### **Elevating youth voices**

Supported by the Being Initiative, we worked with the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (PMNCH) on the 1.8 Billion Young People for Change campaign. It is a bold global movement asking young people what they want for their health and wellbeing, and calling on decision-makers to transform their answers into policies, investments and action. We helped the campaign:

- create the 1.8 Billion What Young People Want chatbot and helped to design a survey to ask young people their views on mental health
- organise a dedicated event at the Clinton Global Initiative that generated new donor commitments for youth mental health
- develop the Global Forum for Adolescents to help better understand the needs of young people across five key wellbeing indicators.

#### **MTV's grant programme**

United for Global Mental Health was an official partner of MTV on its \$100,000 Mental Health Action Day 2023 Grant Programme. The programme supports non-profit organisations to raise awareness of mental health issues ahead of Mental Health Awareness Week. We work with MTV each year to support its Mental Health Action Day.

#### **Lifeline International**

We were delighted to support our partner Lifeline International's campaign to decriminalise suicide. We have been working with the International Alliance for Suicide Prevention and Lifeline International for several years on decriminalising suicide, and stepped up that support as Lifeline launched its global campaign to highlight the issue and inspire action in a number of countries.

#### Digital mental health in the **Philippines**

We worked with our partner #MentalHealthPH in the Philippines to run a digital campaign that engaged top officials, the secretary of health, and the director of the National Centre of Mental Health, and called for the integration of mental health into UHC. This initiative contributed to the inclusion of mental health in the Ministry of Health's eight-action agenda.



## MEET SOME OF OUR ADVOCATES

At United for Global Mental Health, we've built a team with truly diverse expertise. Wherever possible, we've recruited these experts from our national partner agencies, helping to bring our organisation a vast wealth of knowledge and range of perspectives to inform and strengthen our global advocacy efforts.

**Yves Miel Zuñiga (he/him):** is a co-founder of MentalHealthPH, a social advocacy organisation in the Philippines that promotes and protects mental health through digital technology and social media. He joined us from the Philippines Ministry of Health. He leads our work on integrating mental health in health systems, including our work with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.

Aviwe Funani (she/her): is a passionate advocate and communicator on youth mental health, actively engaging in national and global-level discussions. Aviwe joined us from Waves for Change, an adolescent surf therapy organisation in South Africa. Her contributions have been recognised through speaking opportunities on platforms such as the World Economic Forum, the Global Shapers Community, Women Deliver, and Orygen Global. She leads our work on child and youth mental health.

Mohammed Ali Hasnain (he/him): is a barrister with a background in national and regional mental health advocacy with United for Global Mental Health partner Taskeen in Pakistan. He leads our work on mental health rights, suicide decriminalisation and deinstitutionlisation, and is also co-chair of the Action Network UHC and Suicide Decriminalisation Working Groups.

Alessandro Massaza (he/him): is an experienced policy and advocacy advisor, specialising in mental health interventions in adversity settings, and in climate change and mental health. He formerly worked with the WHO on humanitarian mental health and at the Wellcome Trust. He is based in Milan and leads our work on climate change, the environment and mental health.



Yves Miel Zuñiga

Aviwe Funani

Mohammed Ali Hasnain





## SECTION 5: LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024

Our new strategy 2024 to 2026 is an evolution, not a revolution. Our vision remains: a world where everyone, everywhere has someone to turn to for their mental health.

We unite – working with campaigners, practitioners, national organisations, businesses, people with lived experience, funders, researchers, governments and international bodies so that they can learn, collaborate and make greater progress together.

We incubate – designing and setting up the initiatives with partners that will make the most impact on global mental health and help them to grow.

We advocate – identifying where there is a need for financial and political progress, gathering technical insight, finding opportunities to encourage positive change, and working with others to achieve success.

#### **Our priorities in 2024**

We will keep advocating to make sure more people can access the mental health services they need. During the next strategic period, we will be working in five key areas:

**Rights:** We will work with our national partners to evaluate their existing mental health legislation and bring it in line with international human rights standards, while advocating for the complete deinstitutionalisation of mental health care. We will also continue our efforts to decriminalise suicide in all the countries where it is still illegal. Health systems: We will continue to collaborate with global and national partners to integrate mental health into primary health care, with a particular emphasis on communicable and noncommunicable diseases (NCD) programming through national health investments and plans, as well as advocacy at global events such as the World Health Assembly. We'll work with CSOs to amplify our call for a larger and better-supported mental health workforce, and continue to advocate for mental health to be included in how we collectively and nationally address NCDs, HIV and TB.

**Ecosystems:** We will step up our efforts to highlight the links between climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss and mental health, and push for mental health to be integrated into key environment policies and included in discussions on the environment at the World Health Assembly and COP29. We will ensure timely, representative, good-quality data on mental health is available to provide an evidence base for decision-making, and we will seek to increase and improve finance for mental health. We will also work to ensure media and tech companies create positive online environments for mental health and wellbeing. We'll continue to work with our partners Being, Grand Challenges Canada and Foundation Botnar to highlight the need for greater action and funding for youth mental health. And we will promote the work of the Being Initiative to drive change nationally and internationally.

**Field Building:** We will continue to build the world-leading Global Mental Health Action Network – collaborating with its members and partners to maximise our collective impact. And we'll make sure the voices of people with lived experience are heard at every level of decision making.



#### With thanks to:

Grand Challenges Canada Fondation Botnar Being Pinterest Lululemon Elton John Aids Foundation Pivotal Ventures Adobe Foundation The Global Fund Kokoro Change Wellcome Trust Vitol Foundation The Charles Engelhard Foundation

## NO HEALTH WITHOUT Mental Health



#### 𝖓 in ୬ @UnitedGMH

VIEW ONLINE



