INVESTING IN MENTAL HEALTH & PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

Opportunities for IDA and the GFF
The World Bank Group consists of five organisations: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), The International Development Association (IDA), The International Finance Corporation (IFC), The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). Together IBRD and IDA make up the World Bank. IBRD lends to governments in middle-income and creditworthy low-income countries. IDA provides interest-free loans - called credits - and grants to the governments of the poorest countries.

Aside from the considerable sums of financing available – in 2020-21, IDA commitments alone totalled $36 billion – the World Bank also works with national governments on public finance expenditure and so affects policy. This is a very important role at present given the efforts that are currently being made to develop MHPSS investment cases by governments, working with international agencies such as WHO, Unicef and UNDP, and NGOs. The World Bank is influential in helping countries develop and secure financing for such investment cases.

The World Bank has not historically prioritised MHPSS across the organisation. Despite the 2016 global summit ‘Out of the Shadows: Making Mental Health a Global Priority’ there is no department for mental health in the World Bank, and while the institution has invested in mental health projects, MHPSS has not been a prominent or substantially funded part of the World Bank portfolio.

To increase MHPSS funding from the World Bank requires demonstrable demand from potential recipient countries and a clear prioritisation of the issue by the donor countries. The World Bank is currently negotiating the next International Development Association (IDA) replenishment with its donors. This is an opportunity to shape the future IDA strategy and policy towards mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and to help catalyse greater investment from public and private sources.

The World Bank's Global Financing Facility (GFF) is a preeminent funder of newborn, child, adolescent and maternal health. The integration of MHPSS in its policies and investments would improve mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, and strengthen the efficacy of physical health interventions.
World Bank, in response to donor and recipient government encouragement, in the forthcoming IDA21 replenishment negotiations.

If MHPSS is not a fundamental part of World Bank health financing packages - whether through IDA and/or the GFF - a once-in-a-generation opportunity will be missed. As the world responds to COVID-19 and seeks to not only respond but positively reform health care and rebuild societies, MHPSS needs to be fully integrated in such efforts. The mental health and well being of all populations has been impacted, without focused efforts to address this the response to and recovery from COVID-19 will not be effective.

The GFF was established in 2015 as the funding mechanism of the Every Woman Every Child Every (EWEC) initiative. The GFF is the major funding vehicle for sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child adolescent health and nutrition (SRMNCAH+N) for low- and middle-income countries within the World Bank. The GFF has the goal of supporting the 50 countries with the world's highest maternal and child mortality burdens and financing needs. It is currently providing finance to 36 countries with a total of 67 countries eligible.

Whilst the GFF has specific areas of focus, it does not dictate areas of national government expenditure for SRMNCAH+N as a condition of support for national governments. To access GFF funds, governments have to request finance through Investment Cases that set out what the government wants to spend the money on, why the GFF should invest and what the positive impact will be. Therefore, it is critical that the importance of investing in MHPSS is understood within the GFF Secretariat and amongst its donors (the Investment Group) at the global level as well as amongst decision-makers at the national level to ensure governments understand that they can and should include MHPSS in their Investment Cases. As with the World Bank, there is therefore an important opportunity, as more national MHPSS investment cases are developed around the world through programmes such as the WHO Special Initiative for Mental Health and Universal Health Coverage for the GFF to play a critical role in helping secure funding for them.

Moreover, most GFF Trust Fund finance is part of packages with IDA or IBRD, bilateral, other multilateral, and private sector finance. This means that recipient national governments are negotiating funding from the World Bank, and multiple other donors at the same time, influencing and increasing the overall impact of the funding it receives. This process is designed to increase coordination in the negotiation, approval and spending of international development assistance. Hence for greater investment to be made in MHPSS, the GFF has an opportunity to ensure such an approach.

Another significant opportunity that the GFF presents is disbursement linked indicators (DLI) i.e. a performance-based payment system. This means setting indicators linked to increasing MHPSS services coverage at primary or community healthcare levels and/or increasing national MHPSS budgets could drive significant change at a national level.

By negotiating coordinated external financing, with the support of IDA and GFF funding, governments can better prioritise and secure investment in MHPSS.

**ACTIONS REQUIRED**

- The World Bank must integrate MHPSS into the future work of IDA, particularly in the areas of Human Capital, Jobs and Economic Transformation and Fragile, Conflict and Violence.

- All World Bank MHPSS investments must be rights-based and, when within health systems, be integrated into primary and community level healthcare.

- The IDA replenishment documents and the GFF guidance provided to member states should clearly state the importance of investing in MHPSS and reaffirm the eligibility of MHPSS activities for IDA and GFF funding.

- The leadership of the World Bank, including those leading IDA and the GFF, should publicly declare their intention to direct the institution to integrate MHPSS within the strategies of the organisation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, deliver universal health coverage, help end the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for future pandemics.

- The leadership of the World Bank, including those leading IDA and the GFF, should make clear their willingness to support the development of, and securing of funding for, MHPSS investment cases.

- Both IDA and the GFF should include MHPSS alongside physical health as a matter of parity and approach in all relevant strategies and guidance including the Human Capital Project.
REFORMS REQUIRED TO INTEGRATE MHPSS IN IDA INCLUDING IDA20 REPLENISHMENT

At present governments are negotiating the next IDA replenishment (IDA20). During this time the World Bank provides information and seeks feedback from its shareholders to determine its future strategy and direction. If MHPSS is to be fully integrated in the future work of IDA, then the World Bank leadership needs to affirm a cross-cutting policy commitment to recognising the potential of integration of MHPSS and MHPSS-inclusive approaches in all fields of the work supported by IDA.

By doing so, the World Bank will help reduce the stigma and misconceptions that can surround MHPSS and instead demonstrate MHPSS can be addressed in ways that have impact and secure a strong cross-sectoral return on investment. The World Bank leadership should also note that a failure to invest in MHPSS will reduce the impact of IDA investments.

The following are three thematic areas where MHPSS is particularly relevant and should be fully integrated and prioritised appropriately.

HUMAN CAPITAL

Mental health and psychosocial wellbeing are a core element of resilience and the capacity of people and communities to respond to and recover from emergencies and pandemics. The Human Capital approach of the World Bank should include a commitment to integrate MHPSS as a facilitator, if not condition, for both the development and the effective utilisation of Human Capital. MHPSS should be integrated in investment plans that relate to Human Capital.

For Human Capital to be developed effectively, the interdependence needs to be recognized and acted upon between MHPSS and the uptake of education, (life) skills training, health information, and (health) emergency response measures. For Human Capital to be utilised effectively, the interdependence needs to be recognised and acted upon between MHPSS and the employability and the uptake of skills training.

JOBS AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

The World Bank has indicated IDA will increase active engagement and participation of people and communities, as well as the uptake of economic inclusion initiatives. MHPSS should be integrated as part of this effort to ensure MHPSS-inclusive approaches for removing constraints to the creation of more inclusive, attainable jobs and to the uptake by women and youth of job opportunities. Mental ill health contributes to 12 billion days of lost global productivity each year. For inclusive economic transformation and job creation, the interdependence needs to be recognized and acted upon between MHPSS and the uptake by vulnerable people and communities of economic inclusion and employability initiatives. Recovery from economic shocks such as pandemics in-part requires mentally healthy workforces, and mentally resilient workforces can limit the impact of such economic shocks in the future.

FRAGILITY, CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

Strengthening core governance functions and institutions has been identified by the World Bank as an area for enhanced focus. For governance functions and institutions to be effective, they need to interact effectively with the people and communities they are meant to serve.

To ensure the optimal impact and durability of FCV-efforts, recognition of psychosocial dynamics influencing social cohesion and cycles of violence is needed.

All World Bank stakeholders are encouraged to request the World Bank:

- Integrate MHPSS in IDA strategy and programming, particularly as it relates to activities covering Human Capital; Jobs and Economic Transformation; and Fragility, Conflict and Violence
- Produce and disseminate the necessary IDA guidance for staff and recipient countries to enable this integration, upholding a rights-based approach and the integration of MHPSS in COVID-19 response and recovery plans and future pandemic response planning; and full integration of MHPSS in UHC
- Support national governments to integrate MHPSS in their GFF Investment Cases
- Work collaboratively with MHPSS stakeholders, including People With Lived Experience, in the design and delivery of MHPSS programming

All GFF stakeholders are encouraged to request the GFF:

Integrate mental health and psychosocial support in the GFF’s approach to SRMNCAH+N

- Produce and disseminate a briefing making the case for MHPSS in SRMNCAH+N services and investment via the GFF
- Produce and disseminate the necessary GFF guidance for staff and recipient countries to enable the integration of MHPSS, upholding a rights-based approach and the integration of MHPSS in COVID-19 response and recovery plans and future pandemic response planning; and full integration of MHPSS in UHC
- Support national governments to integration MHPSS into their Investment Cases
- Work collaboratively with MHPSS stakeholders, including People With Lived Experience, in the design and delivery of MHPSS programming