



UNITED
FOR
GLOBAL
MENTAL
HEALTH

GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY

ROADMAP 2024-2025



Global Mental Health
Action Network

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.

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*.

The Global Mental Health Advocacy Roadmap 2024-2025 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). The past six years of work by the global mental health community in 2018-2023 have delivered notable

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.
- Inclusion of mental health as part of adapting to, mitigating, and addressing the loss and damage due to **climate change and other environmental crises**.

2. INTEGRATE 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, deliverables and follow up from the UN High-Level Meeting on UHC in September 2023.

- A parity between **mental health and Non-Communicable Disease (NCDs)** issues in key discussions on the topics and in NCD fora e.g. 2025 UN HLM on NCDs and Mental Health.
- The elevation of mental health as a priority alongside physical health in the national and international response to, and recovery from global health emergencies, including 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)**: the scaling up of alternatives to coercion in health and judicial settings, the closure of long-stay mental health facilities, 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. STRENGTHEN 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

Since UnitedGMH was launched in 2018, there has been a gradual increase in political and public support for greater prioritisation of mental health (see table in Annex 1). During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020 - 2022), mental health rose sharply up the political agenda as governments around the world (in high, middle and low income countries) came under increasing pressure to respond to rapidly growing mental health needs.

The impact of COVID-19 led to a loss of education and employment opportunities, especially for young people, and mental health needs have increased further due to rising numbers of people affected by conflict, population displacement and environmental disasters. Young people have been joined by parents and employers, the media, global agencies and sectors as diverse as banking, music and sport, demanding change and seeking to put in place better mental health policies and practices for all.

It is now more widely accepted that mental health impacts people throughout the life course including during their most productive years. Research from The Wellcome Trust showed 92% of people around the world (including in high, middle and low income countries) consider mental health as important or more important than physical health for overall wellbeing. However, people at risk or living with mental health conditions continue to experience high rates of stigma and discrimination, especially in Africa, Latin America and Asia. And investment in mental ill health prevention and support has not risen in line with political attention or population needs, whether that is measured in terms of national or international investment.

In 2023 there were a number of positive developments that are worth celebrating and building upon. The Call to Action organised by the Mexican Government as a follow up to the discussion at the UN Security Council on MHPSS resulted in a UNGA Resolution on MHPSS helping highlight the growing political support for action on mental health. The 2023 UN High-Level Meetings on UHC, TB and Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response all prominently featured mental health in both their preparatory documents, discussions and commitments.

These international agreements demonstrated the opportunity we now have to redress the balance between physical and mental health in terms of political prioritisation, reforms and funding. The inclusion of mental health for the first time in the Global Fund strategy (approved 2022) led, in 2023, to funding applications from multiple countries for mental health related activities. Moreover caregiver mental health was featured at Women Deliver 2023 with an increased number of stakeholders raising this issue as a priority for their work; and there were a significant number of events involving government, UN and philanthropic leaders that pledged greater action on youth mental health including at the Clinton Global Health Initiative and the Global Forum for Adolescents.

At a regional level, the European Commission launched a new mental health initiative in 2023 and the Small Island Developing States launched the Bridgetown Declaration on NCDs and mental health. These initiatives built on WHO regional mental health plans such as the one agreed by African member states in 2022 and below is a list of those plans (and relevant materials) as they are key to driving regional and national action.

EURO (2021): https://www.who.int/europe/health-topics/mental-health#tab=tab_1

AFRO (2022): <https://www.afro.who.int/news/reversing-suicide-mental-health-crisis-africa>

SEARO (2023): <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/372395>

WPRO (2023): <https://www.who.int/westernpacific/publications/i/item/9789290620075>

OTHER INFO:

EMRO and mental health: <https://www.emro.who.int/entity/mental-health/index.html>

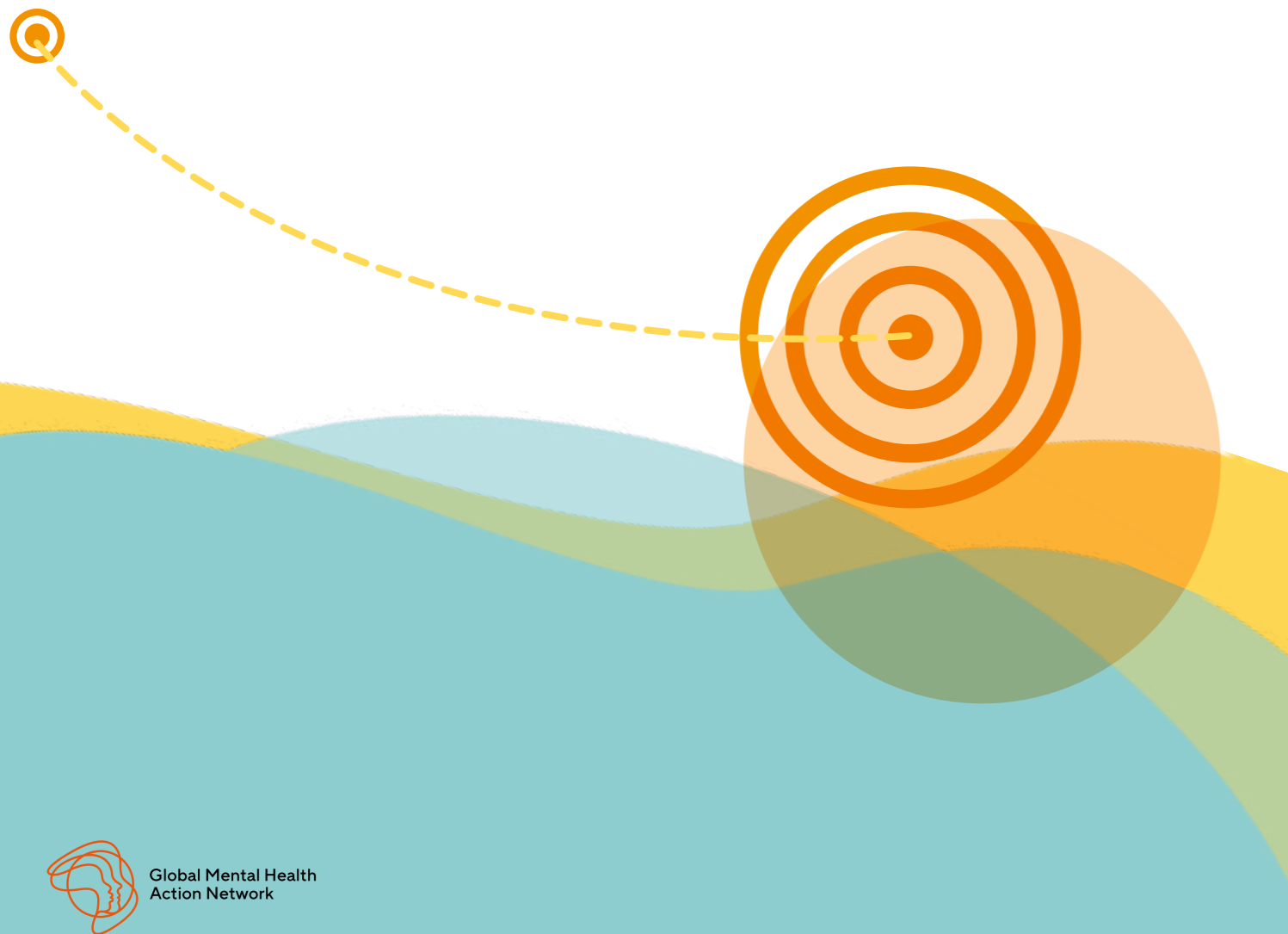
PAHO and mental health: <https://www.paho.org/en/topics/mental-health> (edited)

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Today there is also a greater recognition than ever before of the social determinants of mental health - from the economic to the environmental - and that a multi-sectoral approach will be required. For example, during the first COP Health Day, mental health was featured in a number of events and it was part of the declaration on climate and health document agreed. The impact of climate change and wider environmental issues such as pollution and biodiversity loss is rapidly rising up the agenda among those interested in mental health issues.

In part due to COVID-19, the sector is attracting new multilateral, bilateral, research, private trust and foundation and individual donors, but this is still happening too slowly to meet demand and the funding is unevenly spread. Much of the funding is national or even local in focus, and considerable amounts of philanthropic and research funding is focused on High income Countries' domestic needs. Some of those who have traditionally funded mental health have reduced or ceased their international investments. Overall international funding remains limited although some new players have entered the philanthropic and international donor space in recent years (see UnitedGMH's 2023 Mental Health Financing report).

In summary, the increased political 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 2024 - 2025

While citizens will demand more mental health support, around the world, governments' commitments to act may wane without significant additional pressure from 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.

In 2025 there will be a UN High Level Meeting on NCDs and Mental Health. This is a crucially important moment to drive mental health up to the level of heads of state for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic. There are a series of preparatory moments for this meeting during 2024 and 2025 that are important to ensuring mental health is fully included and actions agreed. These include a financing dialogue in June 2024, WHO regional committee meetings, a UN Secretary General Report, and a series of briefings and papers. Other key moments that will engage heads of state include the 2024 Summit of the Future where long term concerns such as security, the environment and the needs of young people will be discussed.

Meanwhile, at the level of health ministers, a WHA resolution on mental health is being discussed as an initiative to be approved at the World Health Assembly in 2024, building on the UNGA resolution of 2023. And following the first health day at COP28 in UAE there are some plans for a WHA resolution on climate and health in 2024 and for the COP health day to become an annual event. Therefore mental health needs to be fully integrated in the discussions that will take place in 2024/25 on climate change and health, internationally and nationally. The GMHAN produced policy briefs on what this should look like in practice which are available here in English, French and Spanish (Portuguese will be added shortly).

In addition, there are opportunities in 2024-25 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 adaptation, mitigation, and loss and damage policy mechanisms. The Global Fund will be embarking on a new fundraising campaign ahead of the replenishment planned for 2025 therefore it is important to keep emphasising the ways in which integrating mental health is key to accelerating progress to reduce cases and deaths of TB and HIV.

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. In 2024 it is estimated elections affecting approximately three billion people will take place - including in the US, India, South Africa, Mexico, Malaysia, Ghana, Senegal, Pakistan, Iran, Russia and for seats in the European Parliament. National level advocacy and influencing is critically important to amend outdated laws and policies - such as the criminalisation of suicide and the overwhelming emphasis in many countries on long-stay mental health institutions - and ensure fully funded and implemented mental health programmes. Therefore supporting national mental health champions to drive change will be essential.

THE OUTCOMES - WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE IN 2024-25

Political, Policy and Funding Commitments

- The targets of the **WHO Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan (2021-2030)** and the NCDs Global Compact 2020-2030 will garner high level political support and additional funding. This support will reflect the better integration of mental health in **health 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 G7, G20, and replenishments of the Global Fund and GFF.
- 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 COP Health Days, the agreement of a new climate and health resolution at the 2024 World Health Assembly and the 2024 WHO Second Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health.
- New announcements by UN agencies to prioritise mental health and psychosocial support, including MHPSS in **emergency and conflict settings**, are secured by way of follow up to the 2023 **UN General Assembly Resolution on Mental Health**. A WHA resolution on mental health is passed to drive further progress on mental health via the WHO and health ministries.

ADDRESSING INEQUALITY AND TAKING A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

- Awareness on the importance of rights-based mental health-related legislation is increased, building on the WHO and OHCHR 2023 guidance 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/Lifeline International); 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 and highlighted at the meeting planned for March 2024.
- **Maternal mental health** continues to grow as a priority among key governments and funders, and in international meetings such as Women Deliver leading to new policy announcements.
- A number of key meetings take place to drive further action on adolescent mental health, building on the 2023 **Global Forum for Adolescents, the launch of the Being initiative and other work.**

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, based on a UN-wide strategy that was launched in 2023.
- **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.
- 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.
- A 2025 **Lancet Commission on Problematic Internet Usage** provides clear recommendations on how to reduce harms and increase positive outcomes for mental health.

IMPROVING KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT WORKS

- A follow up report to the **Lancet Commission on Ending Stigma and Discrimination** in Mental Health is published in 2024 showing demonstrable progress.
- The Wellcome Trust continues to invest in **developmental pathways**, unlocking the potential of neuroscience, and new and improved digital technology, all with regards to anxiety, depression, and psychosis.
- The **International Alliance for Mental Health Research Funders** publishes new data on the global inequities of mental health research funding, allowing clearer gap analyses and priority setting for funding in Low and Middle Income Countries and specific population groups.
- The Lancet Commission on the **Emotional Determinants of Health** launches in 2024/25.
- The **Global Listening Project** (funded by MacArthur, GSK, Moderna, Gates) will publicly launch its findings in 2024 including data from 80% of the world's countries on how people responded to Covid-19 and what this means for future responses to crises (such as climate change).
- A review will be initiated in 2024 on the impact of the **Grand Challenges in Global Mental Health** and future research priorities for the field.

ROLES KEY STAKEHOLDERS WILL PLAY

<p>National Governments</p>	<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 NCDs and to prevent and control their risk factors in humanitarian emergencies“ • Build on previous commitments and leverage new opportunities in 2024-2025, to accelerate action on mental health including improving human rights. • Integrate mental health in COVID-19 recovery plans; UHC plans; in plans to adapt to, mitigate, and address the loss and damages resulting from the climate crisis.
<p>Funders (bilateral, multilateral and philanthropic)</p>	<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.
<p>UN Agencies & International Organisations</p>	<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. And an ambitious plan to drive progress at the NCDs and Mental Health financing dialogue in 2024 and the HLM on NCDs and Mental Health in 2025. • 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.

<p>Civil society</p>	<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.
<p>Researchers & Academics</p>	<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.
<p>Workplace</p>	<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.

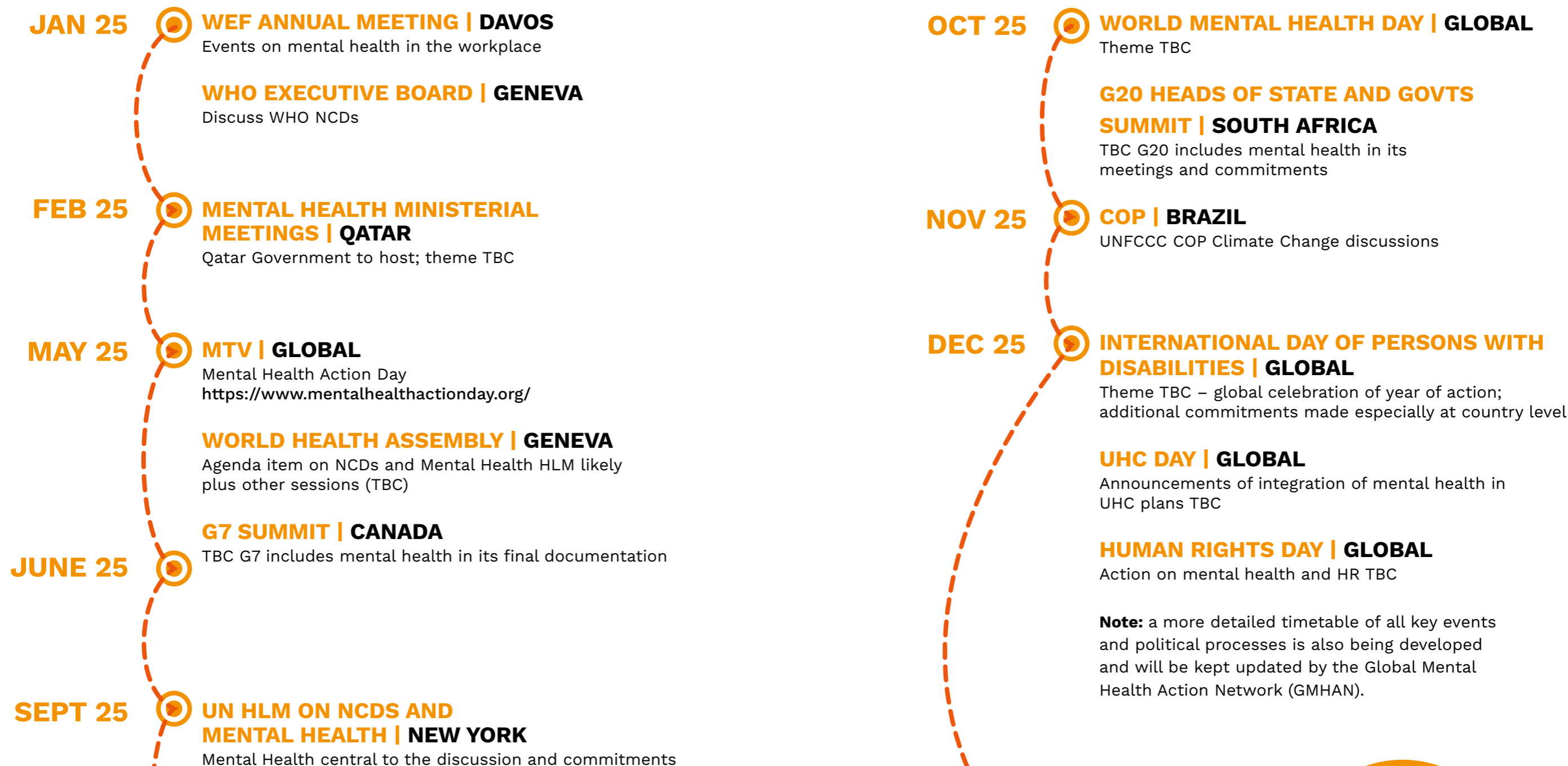
KEY DATES AND EVENTS 2024

During 2024 we will want to ensure mental health is: included in follow up to the three UN HLMs held in 2023; featured as a national election issue with pledges to improve services and support; truly integrated in discussions on climate change globally and nationally. Moreover we want to see progress on preparations for the 2025 HLM on NCDs and Mental Health (including strong political and additional financial support); and mental health is a key part of the discussion of the Summit of the Future as the international community sets direction for the coming decades.



KEY DATES AND EVENTS 2025

During 2025 we will want to build towards strong outcomes from the UN HLM on NCDs and Mental Health so that we can ensure momentum globally and nationally.



ANNEX: 2018-2023 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 (WHA) approved an extension to the **WHO's Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2030**; in 2021 updated annexes were approved. In 2021 and 2022 record numbers of health ministers spoke in favour of greater action on mental health at the WHA, frequently citing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 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**. Mental health received greater mentions and pledges of action in the outcome documents of the UN HLM on TB in 2023 than ever before.
- 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. The EU Mental Health Strategy** launched in 2023.
- 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. The first **COP health day** took place in 2023 with an outcome document that clearly highlighted mental health as an issue to address.

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 UN Secretary General paper backed by member states, and multiple reports and surveys. The UN High Level Meeting on Pandemic Preparedness, Response and Recovery in 2023 included mental health in both the discussion and outcome documents.
- **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 Minimum Intervention Standards Package (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.
- In 2023, a UN General Assembly resolution was agreed on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support, led by the Government of Mexico.

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.
- The 2023 High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) included more comprehensive language on mental health than 2019 and featured a greater number of mental health stakeholders in its processes and outcomes.

UPHOLD THE RIGHTS OF ALL PERSONS TO THE HIGHEST ATTAINABLE LEVEL OF MENTAL HEALTH:

- Suicide decriminalised in Cayman Islands, Singapore, and the UAE in 2021 and 2022; in Pakistan, Ghana, Malaysia and Nigeria in 2023.
- 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. 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 launch of this **OHCHR and WHO** guidance in 2023.
- **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.

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. Hosting of the Countdown assumed by UNICEF in 2023.
- Report on **Mental Health Data and Where to Find It** was launched by UnitedGMH in 2023.

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.
- The **2021 UNICEF State of the World's Children Report** focused 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 helped highlight the disparity in volume of research funding directed to HICs and LMICs.
- The Global Business Collaboration for Better Workplace Mental Health launched in 2020; new reports by Wellcome; launch of the WHO **mental health workplace guidelines and policy brief** in 2022 (hosted by UnitedGMH); UN system-wide mental health at work guidelines launched in 2023. Together these helped inspire 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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