

TRANSCRIPT

Hi, my name is Kyra Ballesteros and I am the Deputy for Research and Innovation with the Non Stock Nonprofit Group Mental Health PH based in the Philippines.

Mental Health in the Philippines is a priority sector already part of the government's push to improve the social determinants of health. So reforms to providing mental health services are already grounded in multi sectoral, multi stakeholder approaches for a whole of government and whole of society approach to health.

However, despite how mental health services are mandated already as part of our Mental Health Act and despite the highest level of prioritization at the national government level, only 1.4% of the Philippines health expenditure was spent on initiatives to address behavioral and mental conditions in 2021. And I think this is where opportunities lie.

We can demand for even greater dialogues with different agencies like the Department of Education or the Civil Service Commission, the Department of Labor and Employment. We can demand mainstreaming of mental health projects and programs that can ensure efficient services and a greater diversity of service at every sector and at every possible level of access