#TimeToInvest in Mental Health

THIS BRIEFING PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE LATEST GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH NEWS WITH RECOMMENDATIONS OF HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED.

THE GLOBAL STATE OF MENTAL HEALTH
Poor mental health is common yet devastating, driven by societal challenges like stress and poverty:

- Each year, depression and anxiety disorders affect at least 284 million and 264 million people respectively. Depression and anxiety are among the leading causes of disability worldwide and are major contributors to the overall global burden of disease.

Every country in the world is failing to manage the escalating fallout:

- Up to half of people with mental health conditions in high-income countries receive no treatment and over three-quarters miss out in low and middle income countries.

Investing in mental health and wellbeing would yield massive returns to individuals, societies and economies:

- A UK study found workplace mental health and wellbeing interventions yield an average ROI of over 4/1.

JOIN US IN GENERATING SUPPORT FOR ACTION ON MENTAL HEALTH BY USING #TIMETOINVEST IN YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS.

For example, you could share:
This year, it’s #TimeToInvest in #mentalhealth. In 2020, I commit to prioritising mental health in my workplace & supporting national efforts to meet global commitments. I hope everyone at #wef20 in @davos will join me.

Progress in 2019 - At last year’s World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, leaders agreed it was #TimeToAct on mental health, laying the foundation for commitments throughout 2019.

WHAT YOU CAN DO
The Annual Meeting provides a great opportunity to raise mental health up the global agenda. This is only possible if those attending the Annual Meeting ensure mental health is visible, discussed and supported at the meeting and beyond.

1. Attend the public sessions on mental health (location and registration through Toplink; events with * require a White Badge):

   - The Big Picture on Mental Health*
     Tuesday 21st January, 13:30 - 14:00
     Wednesday 22nd January, 10:00 - 10:30

   - An Insight, An Idea with Deepika Padukone*
     Tuesday 21st January, 14:45 - 15:15*

   - Road to recovery: Responding to Children’s Mental Health in Conflict
     Wednesday 22nd January, 14:00 - 16:00

   - Protecting Mental Health in Youth*
     Wednesday 22nd January, 16:00 - 17:00

   - Mental Health in a Digital World
     Thursday 23rd January, 10:00 - 10:30

   - Working Well: Leading a Mentally Healthy Organisation*
     Thursday 23rd January, 12:30 - 14:00

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**IF YOU SHARE ONE MESSAGE FOR DAVOS 2020:**

2. Prioritise mental health in your workplace. Please see QualityRights box.

3. Implement globally agreed mental health targets and strategies to meet international obligations:
   a. Sustainable Development Goal mental health commitments.

4. Share messages and organise activities for World Mental Health Day on 10 October, aligning with WHO and World Federation for Mental Health’s priorities.

5. Ensure people with lived experience are at the centre of policy and action by empowering them to transform mental health and social systems through meaningful and active involvement.

**GLOBAL POLICY**

During the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York, September’s High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage saw government leaders sign a political declaration, which reaffirmed mental health as equally important to physical health. At the meeting, 13 governments, the EU and UN drew attention to mental health.

“MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS CAUSE ENORMOUS ANGUISH TO INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR LOVED ONES, THEY HAVE BEEN NEGLECTED AND STIGMATISED FOR TOO LONG, THIS INJUSTICE MUST STOP”.

- ANTÓNIO GUTERRES, UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

A side event on mental health in the margins of UNGA saw UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, and the President of the UN General Assembly, Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, call on leaders to act on their pledge.

**WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

Mental health took centre stage during a technical briefing at the World Health Assembly to introduce WHO’s Special Initiative for Mental Health: Universal Health Coverage for Mental Health. The new Initiative seeks to ensure access to quality and affordable care for mental health conditions to 100 million more people in 12 countries within the next five years.

A packed room of government representatives and partner organisations heard from Queen Mathilde of Belgium and speakers from Peru, Ghana and Bangladesh on initiatives to improve mental health services in their countries and how the Special Initiative could make a big difference to countries wishing to establish or scale up their services.

**QUALITYRIGHTS**

In many places around the world, it is still common for people with mental health conditions to be locked up alone in prison-like cells or chained to their beds, unable to move.

The WHO’s QualityRights initiative aims to end such abuses by promoting the human rights of people with mental health conditions while improving their access to high quality services.

Ghana recently became the first country to implement QualityRights nation-wide and the initiative is now being introduced or expanded in 31 countries, facilitated by online training and an online portal recently launched by the WHO and supported by a wide range of partners.
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**GLOBAL POLICY CONTINUED**

The Netherlands hosted the second annual Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit, which led 24 countries and 10 aid organisations to commit to integrating and scaling up mental health and psychosocial support in humanitarian responses, as well as raising awareness. Support from the Government of the Netherlands for a WHO-UNICEF project to develop a new Minimum Service Package for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support was also announced.

The Global Fund to Fight HIV, TB and Malaria raised over $14 billion to fund its next three years of activities. The BluePrint Group and other allies have organised events and letters to ask The Global Fund Board to strengthen HIV and TB interventions through integrating mental health services. Supporters include:

- The Governments of Ireland, Italy, Portugal, The Netherlands and the UK.

Mental health and psychosocial support was a key theme at the 33rd International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Conference in December 2019, serving as the focus of one of six formal resolutions and various high-level events.

Addressing needs in emergencies, the resolution inspired five pledges, including on Psychological First Aid for All, which was sponsored by the Governments and Red Cross societies of both the Netherlands and Denmark, as well as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Member States and other organisations can submit additional pledges until 31 March 2020.

**ELEVATING YOUNG PEOPLE’S PRIORITIES**

Wellcome announced an extra £200 million for mental health research at Davos 2019, with a focus on young people, depression and anxiety.

The World Economic Forum and Orygen started a partnership to put youth mental health on the agenda at Davos 2020. They are jointly developing an advocacy toolkit for local communities, as well as frameworks for care and investment, accounting for different national income levels.

UNICEF and WHO hosted the inaugural Leading Minds conference this year focussing on child and adolescent mental health, supported by the Italian government. UNICEF revealed that the 2021 State of the World’s Children report would focus on mental health from a broad, wellbeing perspective.
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**MAKING PROGRESS AT A NATIONAL LEVEL**
The global Speak Your Mind campaign launched, generating national movements in 15 countries, all calling on leaders to provide quality mental health care for all. National campaign wins include:

**Tonga**
- First-ever mental health policy developed.
- Mental health budget **tripled**.
- Mental health made a key goal of the inaugural National Youth Policy.

**Sierra Leone**
- The government committed to revising the National Mental Health Act (1902 Lunacy Act) in 2020 and increasing funding for mental health.
- Mental Health Policy and Strategic Plan **launched**.

**Nigeria**
- Sniper, a pesticide implicated in the majority of suicides, has been **banned**.

**RECALIBRATING WORKPLACES**
In January, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced their plan to develop WHO guidelines on mental health in the workplace, with the support of the Wellcome Trust. Preliminary work began in November. The guidelines are expected to be ready in two years.

Following their participation in the ‘Mental Health Matters’ plenary session at Davos 2019, HSBC launched a company-wide mental health education programme across 65 countries and territories for their 238,000 employees, with plans to share its learnings with other employers.

**COMMUNITY-LED MENTAL HEALTH IN INDIA**
The Atmiyata model in India equips volunteers from rural communities to increase access to mental health and social care. Community volunteers (Champions) are trained for a week, further supervised and mentored by community facilitators.

- It has also proven scalable, having been rolled out to reach 1 million adults across 500 villages in the Mehsana district in Gujarat. Champions have **12,500** people with common mental health needs using evidence-based techniques.

- Referred **2,500** people with severe needs to public mental health facilities.

- Facilitated access to social benefits for **5,000** people in distress.

- **45,000** people have watched films on mental health awareness

Results from a randomised control trial evaluation will be shared in early 2020.*
SUPPORT FROM THE BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION

Mental health was in the spotlight at Goalkeepers, an annual sustainable development summit run by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which had previously only covered the physical side of health.

Activities of the Mental Health for All ‘accelerator’ – a collaboration powered by the global charity, United for Global Mental Health:

- Launched a new partnership between HSBC and the Speak Your Mind campaign.

- Raised the profile of the commitment of the Government in Sierra Leone to reform its mental health legislation and encouraged other governments to update their policies and practice on mental health.


WHO CHOoses Global Mental Health Champion

At the World Health Assembly in May, Cynthia Germanotta was appointed the WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Mental Health. Mrs Germanotta is President of the youth-focused Born This Way Foundation, which she co-founded with her daughter Lady Gaga in 2012.

THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Key points from the Convention include:

- Making disability issues an integral part of sustainable development strategies.

- Valuing existing and potential contributions by persons with disabilities to the overall well-being and diversity of their communities.

- Promoting the full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

- Enabling the full participation by persons with disabilities to enhance their sense of belonging and underpin significant societal advances and the eradication of poverty.

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**WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY**
Attracting unprecedented public engagement – and the support of global leaders including the UN Secretary-General, Prime Minister of New Zealand, UNICEF Executive Director and leadership of the Red Cross movement – the global mental health community rallied behind the call for everyone to take #40seconds of action for mental health to highlight how often someone is lost to suicide worldwide.

**WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR IN 2020**

14-15 February
BluePrint Group meeting; Nairobi, Kenya.

17-19 April
Spring Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group.

17-21 May
World Health Assembly; Geneva, Switzerland.

15-30 September
UN General Assembly will mark the 10 year countdown to the 2030 deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals; New York City, USA.

October
3rd Global Ministerial Mental Health Summit; France.

10 October
World Mental Health Day.

16-18 October
The Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group.

November
Leading Minds 2020.

4-5 December 2020
The Movement for Global Mental Health’s 6th Global Mental Health Summit, Chennai, India.

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**THE BLUEPRINT GROUP**

Convened by United for Global Mental Health since July 2018, this communications and advocacy group coordinates action on mental health worldwide.

The group has hundreds of members from governments, international organisations, NGOs, individuals with lived experience, trusts, foundations, the private sector and academia.

Email anna@unitedgmh.org for more information or to join.