

World Mental Health Report: Transforming Mental Health For All

A briefing for philanthropic funders

WHO'S WORLD MENTAL HEALTH REPORT: *TRANSFORMING MENTAL HEALTH FOR ALL*, which is being released on 17 June 2022, provides the most comprehensive overview of the state of mental health to date. It clearly explains why and where change is needed, and provides practical recommendations to improve mental health for all. The report provides insights into not only what to fund, but also how.

Prospira Global, with WHO's support, has developed this briefing on the report for philanthropic funders. Prospira Global is a boutique consulting firm that advises and supports philanthropists, businesses and investors design and implement their global mental health strategies. We hope this briefing encourages you to read the report in full and is a helpful aid for your mental health giving strategies.

Our key take-aways for philanthropic funders:

1. The report is a timely, comprehensive, useful and easy-to-read guide to inform any mental health philanthropic giving strategy.
2. It will be critical to mobilise new sources of funding to meet the huge gap between need and supply in all countries.
3. Philanthropy has an important role to play, especially as a catalyst.
4. Humanitarian crises not only increase the need for greater mental health funding but can also be 'windows of opportunity' to galvanise new support.
5. There is now more-than-adequate evidence upon which to act and invest, in all resource contexts.
6. A multisectoral approach to funding mental health is needed.
7. The World Mental Health Report provides insights into not only what to fund, but also how.
8. The World Mental Health Report shines a spotlight on excellent charities around the world funders to consider supporting, including the critical work of WHO itself (including a feature on the HealthFund4Life and WHO Special Initiative, which focuses on 12 priority countries ready for transformation).

The Report, in brief

- *Purpose*: "to inspire and inform better mental health for all" and show "why and where change is most needed and how it can best be achieved".

- *Audience*: Primarily written for health decision-makers (especially Ministries of Health and their partners), although is still an invaluable and important source of information for funders.

Key messages:

- Health and social systems are ill-equipped to respond to the large and growing mental health needs of our world.
- Stigma, discrimination and human rights violations against people with mental health conditions are widespread in communities and care systems everywhere.
- Investing in mental health reduces costs and improves lives. And, ongoing crises around the world increasingly justify prioritizing mental health.
- A transformation in mental health is needed at all levels across three key areas of transformation:
 1. Deepening the value and commitment we give to mental health
 2. Reshaping environments for better mental health
 3. Strengthening mental health care

Key Take-aways for Philanthropic Funders

1. The World Mental Health Report is a comprehensive, useful and easy-to-read guide to inform mental health philanthropic giving strategies

“This report is designed to inspire and inform the indisputable and urgent transformation required to ensure better mental health for all.” pg. xiii

The Mental Health Report provides a timely overview of the state of mental health in our world today.

The report draws upon existing data and agreed global frameworks to guide recommendations and showcase good practice from around the world, voicing people’s lived experience stories throughout and providing clear infographics. It is broken into 8 chapters, outlined below.

Key Mental Health Concepts

- Mental health has intrinsic and instrumental value and is integral to our general well-being.
- How we experience mental health changes over the course of our lives.
- Everyone has a right to mental health.
- Mental health is relevant to many sectors and stakeholders.
- Mental health is determined by a complex interplay of individual, social and structural stresses and vulnerabilities.

- **Chapter 1 (Introduction):** provides a clear and fascinating overview of the history of global mental health, including the establishment of global frameworks to drive progress and a little on where progress has occurred, and where it has not.
- **Chapter 2 (Principles and drivers):** provides an overview of core concepts in mental health which should be considered within any giving strategy. It also highlights key forces and threats that influence mental health today, especially focusing on: a) economic and social inequalities; b) public health emergencies (including COVID-19); c) humanitarian emergencies (including conflict and forced displacement); and d) the climate crisis.
- **Chapter 3 (World mental health today):** outlines the state of mental health and mental health systems around the world, highlighting key gaps and laying bare the costs of not investing in mental health.
- **Chapter 4 (Benefits of change):** makes the case for investment in mental health, including useful statistics and case studies for any donor. It shows how transforming mental health care provides an indispensable platform for advancing public health and well-being, protecting human rights and promoting social and economic development.
- **Chapter 5 (Foundations for change):** clearly outlines key areas to focus on for systematic change. This is a helpful roadmap of key areas donors should be investing in, grounded in established frameworks.
- **Chapter 6 (Promotion and prevention for change):** explains and explores the multisectoral promotion and prevention strategies required at all stages of life to transform mental health, zooming in on three example priorities for action: suicide prevention, child and adolescent mental health, and mental health at work.
- **Chapter 7 (Restructuring and scaling up care for impact):** explains the major restructuring and scaling up required to transform mental health care services in both formal and non-formal settings. In particular, it emphasises the need for a community-based network of interconnected mental health and social services and shows the importance of providing person-centred, human rights- based and recovery-oriented care.
- **Chapter 8 (Conclusion):** calls for a global transformation in mental health at all levels, further clarifying the areas of action that will need collaborative influencing, implementation and, of course, funding.

2. It will be critical to mobilise new sources of funding to meet the huge gap between need and supply in all countries

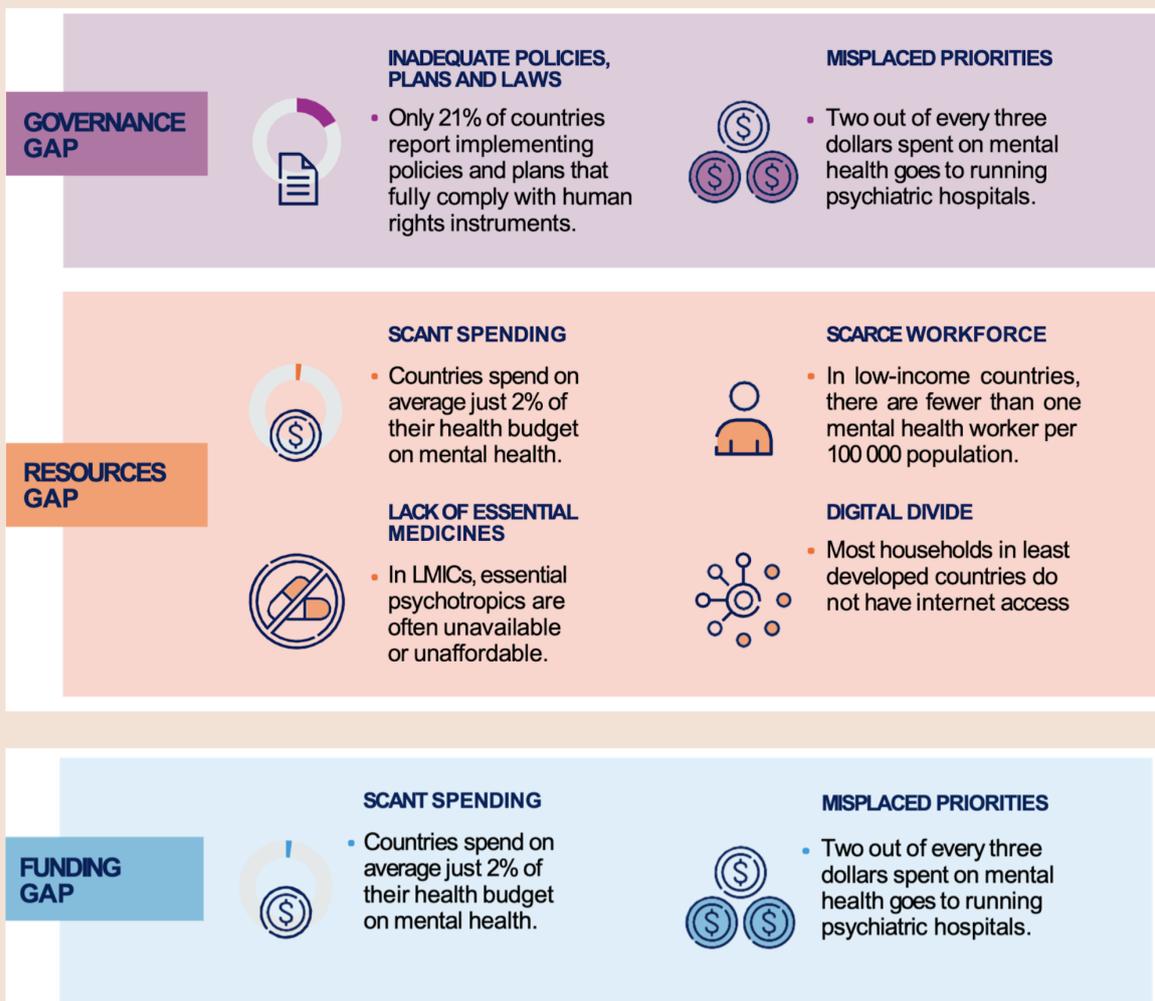
“No country will be able to meet the mental health needs of their populations without mobilising additional funds and human resources for mental health” pg 128

Drawing upon the recent WHO Mental Health Atlas data released in 2021, the report powerfully demonstrates the universal and persistent gap in financing that exists in all countries, explaining these gaps in detail. While it does discuss some ways in which existing funding could be more efficient and effective (for example, shifting to funding community based programmes), it demonstrates that it will be critical to mobilise new sources of funding. It demonstrates how “mental health attracts the least donor funding of any area of health”.

While needs are large and underfunded across all countries the report clearly demonstrates that the greatest gaps in need are in low and middle-income countries.

“Strengthening information, evidence and understanding can only go so far in facilitating mental health reform. To transform mental health services, plans and policies must be translated into action through financing that allocates resources as and where they are needed.

Adequate financing provides the basis for establishing administration and governance mechanisms, developing and deploying a trained workforce and installing relevant infrastructure and technology to scale up delivery of sustainable mental health Services.” pg 117



3. Philanthropy has an important role to play, especially as a catalyst

“Most funding for mental health should come from domestic sources, to ensure sustainability. But there is a role for external funders, for example through direct assistance, foreign direct investment, corporate social responsibility or philanthropy.” pg 128

Drawing from the 2018 Lions Head Report the report argues that while most funding would ideally come from domestic resources to ensure sustainability, external sources of funding have a critical role to play including philanthropy. This applies to both domestic and international funding, and is called out as “particularly important in low-income countries, where budgetary pressures are often greatest.” Some good news is that the level of external investment in mental health has risen since 2000, although its contribution remains limited and marginal compared with external investment in other areas of health. In our world where public budgets continue to be vastly insufficient to meet demand, philanthropic funding is always needed, across almost all areas of action, including to:

- Play a catalytic role by seed funding programmes and pilots before they are ready to be adopted by public programming and funding. This point is powerfully illustrated through a successful case study from Pakistan on page 132.
- Scale proven interventions that operate outside of the public sector.
- Fund research and advocacy to strengthen public policy and programmes and to influence funding allocations.
- Fund skills-based training to plug the human capacity gaps that exist in every country (both formal and informal).
- Participate as an important voice in multisectoral efforts to transform systems and collaborate with governments.

4. Humanitarian emergencies not only increase the need for greater mental health funding, but can also be ‘windows of opportunity’ to galvanise new support

“Addressing the social and mental health impacts of emergencies is ... not only part of humanitarian emergency preparedness, response and recovery but also of peacebuilding” pg. 33–34

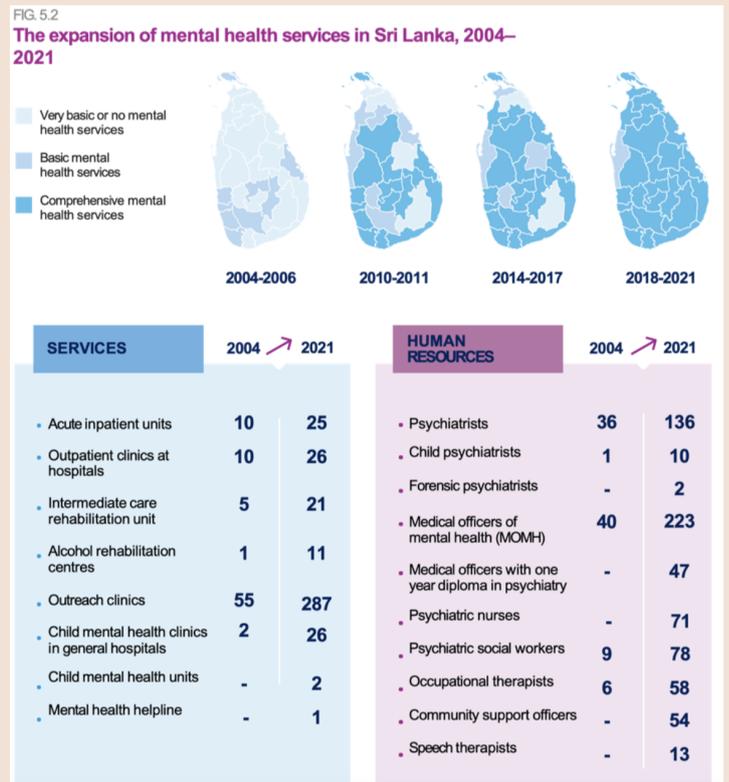
The mental health needs of people affected by conflicts, disasters and disease outbreaks have become widely recognised. In addition, they offer ‘unparalleled platforms for change to develop better care systems for the long term’, due to the surge of national and international aid combined with the increased focus on people’s mental health. This creates a window of opportunity whereby increased funding can align with political interests and an opportunity to create lasting impact at scale. The report highlights examples of countries around the world, including Albania, Sri Lanka and Syria, where countries have used emergency situations to build better mental health systems. For philanthropic donors who are considering how to respond to humanitarian crises and want to effect change at scale, this can be an impactful approach.

Case Study: The expansion of mental health services in Sri Lanka 2004 - 2021

In Sri Lanka, the impacts of the 2004 Asian tsunami dramatically increased the political interest in mental health, and facilitated the mobilization of immediate resources for emergency mental health care, which then provided a platform for broader national mental health reform.

Supported by WHO, the Ministry of Health worked with stakeholders to develop a national mental health policy focused on decentralizing care and ensuring the local availability of mental health services in all districts of the country. The plan was implemented through multiple programmes at national and district levels; and today, every district in the country has mental health services infrastructure, compared with a third before the tsunami.

Pg. 119 -120



Source: Ministry of Health Sri Lanka et al, 2021 (262). Directorate of Mental Health, Sri Lanka, unpublished data, June 2022

5. There are existing solutions that work and need funding now

“There is now more-than-adequate evidence upon which to act and invest, no matter the resource context.” pg 71

One common barrier to philanthropic funding can be a lack of clarity on what to fund. Historically this barrier has been particularly relevant for funders given the complexity of issues surrounding mental health and continued research that is required in many areas of mental health, as demonstrated through United for Global Mental Health’s Funding the future of mental health report. The WHO report addresses this barrier directly and clearly demonstrates there are proven solutions that need funding now. This includes:

- Summarising a core set of cost-effective interventions that are feasible, affordable and appropriate for resource poor settings
- Priority interventions to promote and protect mental health
- Interventions for scaling up care in both formal and non-formal settings
- Activities identified to eliminate discrimination and uphold human rights



In addition to providing assurance to donors on the impact of investing in these solutions, the report points to a vastly expanded number of practical, evidence-based mental health guidelines, manuals and other tools to guide effective giving, which are available from WHO, national governments, academia and civil society partners.

CASE STUDY

BOX 7.6
Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) is a national programme of evidence-based psychological treatments for anxiety and depression in the United Kingdom. Launched in 2008 as a service for adults, the programme has since expanded to include a children and young people's sub-component, including in schools. Receiving around 1.25 million referrals each year, it is by far the largest publicly funded and systematic implementation of evidence-based psychological treatment in the world. The programme has served as a model for developing similar services in Australia, Canada, Japan and Norway.

IAPT adopts a stepped care approach that offers progressively intensive treatments, according to need. People are initially offered low-intensity,

guided self-help based on principles of CBT. The self-help is psychoeducational in nature and is delivered over the phone, via computerized CBT, in large groups or individually. It is delivered by supervised non-specialized helpers called Psychological Well-being Practitioners who provide standardized, evidence-based interventions. Practitioners are guided by associated assessment and treatment competency measures.

People who do not improve after guided self-help are stepped up to receive high-intensity psychological therapies from qualified therapists.

A review of 60 studies found large improvements in depression and anxiety among people attending IAPT services.

Source: Wakefield et al, 2021 (469).

6. A multisectoral approach to funding mental health is needed

“Successful multisectoral collaboration requires intelligent information sharing, joint planning, strategic design and good delivery.” pg 160

As the factors that determine mental health are multisectoral in nature, interventions to promote and protect mental health need to be delivered across multiple sectors. When it comes to delivering care, a multisectoral approach is needed, as people with mental health conditions often require services and support that extend beyond appropriate clinical care (usually given through the health sector) to also include, for example:

- financial support (through the social sector)
- a place to stay (through the housing sector)
- a job (through the employment sector)
- educational support (through the education sector)
- community support (through the social affairs sector)
- various legal protections (through the judicial system)

As a result, funders should consider supporting mental health as new streams of work. They can, and should, also consider how existing funding portfolios can leverage and integrate mental health into these areas. For example, the report looks in some detail at how the health sector can contribute by embedding promotion and prevention programmes in existing health services and supporting initiatives in non-health settings (like schools and businesses). In addition, there have been successful examples of integrating mental health into complementary programmes like HIV prevention and treatment programmes, maternal health programmes and women's empowerment.

The responsibility of employers and government to promote all people's mental health at work is highlighted as a particularly important multisectoral approach that combines legislation and regulation, organisational strategies, manager training and interventions for workers.

7. The World Mental Health Report provides insights into not only what to fund, but also how

“I hope that in the future, survivors who want to recover from the difficult experiences they've been through will be treated like heroes. ... And I will continue to pave this path, so that knowledge based on personal experience can someday lead the world's future health systems”. Lion Gai Meir, Israel. Pg. 24

Throughout the report WHO highlights lessons learnt that point not only to what needs to be funded, but also to which approaches can drive real impact. These emphasise the need to:

- Consider the existing agreed frameworks at global, regional and national levels to inform needs analysis
- Ensure that any programmes funded use a human rights-based approach
- Make decisions on what to fund based on needs analysis, not historical convention
- Ensure interventions are evidence-based, and/or incorporate research into funding to develop an evidence base where this may not already exist
- Bring knowledge and experience of mental health conditions to funders and integrate voices of lived experience into funder decision making
- Build in a sustainable exit strategy to any funding, including considering how programmes can achieve scale once proven, for example through public services

8. The report shines a spotlight on excellent charities around the world who are doing good work for funders to consider supporting, including the critical work of the WHO themselves.

The Prospira Global team regularly advises new corporate and private philanthropic funders on effective mental health charities to fund, especially as they expand into giving in new countries. A historic lack of mental health funders means that philanthropic databases do not exist in many countries, so it can be difficult to identify which charities to fund. WHO's new report shines a light on more than 40 excellent charities doing impactful work around the world, which we hope will be helpful for funders who are considering giving to mental health.

Most importantly, the report also highlights the critical work of the WHO in supporting a global transformation in mental health. WHO itself also urgently needs new core funds to deliver its critical work as well as funding for specific programmes. A case study is included which highlights the WHO Special Initiative on Mental Health which aims to ensure 100 million more people have access to quality and affordable mental health care, and urgently requires funding, including from philanthropists to catalyse national transformation. Another major programme currently seeking funding is a joint initiative between the WHO and UNICEF focusing specifically on scaling up mental health support for young people around the world.

CASE STUDY

BOX 5.2

WHO Special Initiative for Mental Health

In 2019, the WHO Special Initiative for Mental Health was established to accelerate access to mental health services through UHC. The goal is to ensure 100 million more people have access to quality and affordable mental health care.

The initiative will initially be implemented in 12 countries to demonstrate what is possible. Eight countries have already been selected: Bangladesh, Ghana, Jordan, Nepal, Paraguay, Philippines, Ukraine and Zimbabwe. In each country, the Special Initiative will be anchored in two broad types of strategic action:

- advancing mental health policies, advocacy and human rights; and
- scaling up interventions and services across community-based, general health and specialist settings.

Source: WHO, 2021 (234).

Importantly, the initiative takes a case-by-case approach to embedding mental health in UHC and mental health reform, using detailed country assessments and consultations to develop a plan that builds on existing strengths and responds to national priorities so that support can be targeted where it is needed most. Ministries of Health are supported to lead national-level transformation with emphasis on scaling up services to districts and regions. In this way, the initiative hopes to secure sustainable scale up.

Priorities across several countries focus on the building blocks for health system strengthening, for example governance, access to services and information systems. Some countries, such as Paraguay, are also focusing their efforts on the mental health aspects of COVID-19 recovery.

TOOL

BOX 5.8

Health4Life Fund on NCDs and mental health

Health4Life Fund is a UN-wide multi-partner trust fund devoted to NCDs and mental health that was established in 2021 under the auspices of the United Nations Inter Agency NCD Task Force.

It is designed to support LMICs with catalytic grants, in order to stimulate multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral action at country level, increase domestic funding, and improve policies, legislation and regulation.

Source: WHO, 2021 (290).

H4LF seeks to enable governments and civil society to address national priorities and achieve scale for innovative actions that strengthen the health system. This includes implementing recommended interventions for preventing and managing NCDs and mental health conditions across the life-course while enhancing a broader multisectoral response to underlying social and structural determinants.

Contact

For more information about this briefing or for support developing your mental health strategies please contact Prospira Global at info@prospira.global

For more information on WHO's work please contact the Prospira Global team, and we will be happy to connect you with the Mental Health and Substance Use Department.