



**GOVERNEMENT**

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*

*Sommet mondial  
sur la santé mentale*

**« Mind  
Our Rights,  
Now! »**

**Workshop 6**

**“From Texts to Transformation”:  
Mobilizing global commitments,  
resolutions, and guidance for  
successful mental health reform**



## Co-organizers (name, organization, email, phone):

- \* Dévora Kestel, Department of Mental Health and Substance Use, World Health Organization
- \* Rabih El Chammay, Ministry of Health, Lebanon

## What is this workshop about? >>

Several international conventions, resolutions and strategic policy documents exist that pursue a human rights-based approach to promote the highest level of health, including mental health, through mental health policy change and reform at the country level. Prominent examples of such texts include: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966); the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006); the UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030); the WHO Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan (2021-2030), and the UN Research Roadmap for the COVID-19 Recovery (2020).

While these and other relevant documents have helped to create a global shift in social and cultural paradigms around mental health and psychosocial disability, and provide international standards, frameworks, and guidance for rights-based mental health systems, their effective implementation at the country level can be challenging and often remains partial at best. The COVID-19 pandemic, structure of mental health systems and services, lack of funding and investment toward mental health, allocation of resources, stigma and other socioeconomic and cultural contexts continue to be barriers to implementation.

Consequently, further efforts are needed to enable implementation of the provisions of international texts and ensure the highest attainable standard of mental health as a fundamental human right. This workshop will hear perspectives from high-level representatives, carers, and people with lived and living experience on how to mobilize global texts in order to build successful and sustainable mental health systems that respect and promote human rights.

### **Workshop Objectives:**

- 1) Demonstrate the relevance and role of international mental health texts to protect the right to the highest attainment of physical *and* mental health.
- 2) Outline key strategies for how government and non-governmental actors can leverage international documents to advance domestic mental health policy and practice.
- 3) Identify solutions to key barriers to domestic mental health reform.



» **Chair(s) name(s):**  **Dévora Kestel and Rabih El Chammay**

<b>Suggested speakers</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Email/phone</b>	<b>Video call / in Paris ?</b>
<b>Dévora Kestel</b>	WHO	Switzerland	Introduction	<a href="mailto:Kesteld@who.int">Kesteld@who.int</a>	In Paris
<b>Robert van Voren</b>	FGIP	Netherlands	Human rights & MH	<a href="mailto:rvvoren@gip-global.org">rvvoren@gip-global.org</a>	TBC
<b>Christine Morgan</b>	National Mental Health Commission	Australia	Mental health policy	<a href="mailto:Christine.MORGAN@MentalHealthCommission.gov.au">Christine.MORGAN@MentalHealthCommission.gov.au</a>	Video call
<b>Rabih El Chammay</b>	MoH	Lebanon	National policy reform	<a href="mailto:rabihelechammay@gmail.com">rabihelechammay@gmail.com</a>	In Paris
<b>Bernard Jacob</b>	Federal MoH	Belgium	National service reform	<a href="mailto:bernard.jacob@health.fgov.be">bernard.jacob@health.fgov.be</a>	In Paris
<b>Frances Prescilla Cuevas</b>	MoH	Philippines	National service reform	<a href="mailto:prescyncd@gmail.com">prescyncd@gmail.com</a>	Video call
<b>Taha Sabri</b>	Co-founder, TASKEEN	Pakistan	Overcoming barriers	<a href="mailto:taha@taskeen.org">taha@taskeen.org</a>	Video call





## **Questions / topics to be discussed** >>

- \* What is the relevance and role of international covenants and mental health texts in promoting and protecting the right to the highest attainment of physical and mental health?
- \* What strategies can government and non-governmental actors use to leverage international documents to advance domestic mental health policy and practice?
- \* What approaches and solutions have been found to overcome barriers to domestic mental health reform?
- \* What tools could or do help to translate principles from international texts into human rights-based approaches to mental health service reform at national level?



## **Final recommendations**

International covenants and mental health texts – such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the UN’s Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and on the Rights of Children, as well as the WHO’s Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan and QualityRights ToolKit – provide highly relevant frameworks, principles and options for transforming mental health policy and services at country level. However, their influence, uptake and implementation is often sub-optimal, due to insufficient communication of these covenants and texts to those able to change or advocate for policies, programs, systems and supports; adaptation to national and local contexts; and, learning support opportunities. Furthermore, challenges in restructuring mental health systems and services, insufficient funding and investment toward mental health, especially given the resource demands of the COVID-19 pandemic response, as well as stigma and other socioeconomic and cultural contexts, continue to be barriers to implementation. It is therefore recommended that:

1. Organizations and partners involved in the generation and production of international texts aimed at promoting the highest attainable standard of mental health as a fundamental human right can enhance opportunities for national uptake by supporting country-level adaptation (to local cultures and languages), contextualization (to diverse sociocultural and political realities), capacity-building and implementation (including policy briefs, e-training tools, expert in-country missions and a practical guide to existing texts and accompanying case studies to support their operationalization). Organizations and partners involved in the generation and production of international texts can develop operational tools and knowledge translation methods to streamline the complexity and interpretation of international texts.
2. National authorities or entities responsible for mental health policy, legislation and practice standards establish mechanisms and processes for discussion, adaptation and application of international texts, including multi-stakeholder consultations, inter-country exchanges, workshops and taskforces, in partnership with people with lived/living experience and mental health champions, healthcare systems, community mental health services, and partners outside the health sector. Using a whole of society approach, national authorities can connect global momentum on mental health to domestic priorities and align domestic strategies with wider international goals.
3. National and international non-governmental actors and civil society leverage international documents to advance domestic mental health policy and practice through policy analysis, rights-based promotion and advocacy, and community mobilization. Using a rights-based approach to advocate for rights-based domestic policy includes adopting the principles laid out in international texts, such as universality, equality, and non-discrimination.
4. The international community work together across all levels of government and civil society to advocate for the ratification of key international texts to help



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drive domestic mental health reform and advocate for public and political will to prioritize mental health and human rights.



## Timing of the workshop

Workshop 6	
TIME	ITEM
<b>Opening Session</b>	
9:30 – 9:40 (10 minutes)	<b>Workshop Welcome and Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Dévora Kestel</b>, Department of Mental Health and Substance Use, World Health Organization</li> <li>○ <b>Rabih El-Chammay</b>, Ministry of Health, Lebanon</li> </ul>
<b>PART 1: Human Rights and Mental Health in International Texts</b>	
9:40 – 10:05 (25 minutes)	<b>Panel: Key Principles and Proposed Actions in International Texts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Moderated by <b>Dévora Kestel</b>, Director, Department of Mental Health and Substance Use, World Health Organization</li> </ul> <p><i>Each panelist will provide approximately 3 minutes of opening remarks, followed by 15 minutes of moderated discussion.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Rabih El Chammay</b>, Head of the National Mental Health Programme, Ministry of Public Health, Lebanon (Paris)</li> <li>○ <b>Christine Morgan, CEO</b>, National Mental Health Commission of Australia (virtual)</li> <li>○ <b>Robert Van Voren</b>, Chief Executive of Human Rights in Mental Health - Federation Global Initiative on Psychiatry (FGIP) (virtual)</li> </ul> <p><i>Guidance for Panelists' Opening Remarks:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Describe the importance of discussing international covenants and mental health texts from your country or organization's perspective.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Discussion Questions for Panelists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>What do you see as the role of international texts?</i></li> <li>○ <i>Which texts do you find the most relevant for advancing mental health reform and why?</i></li> <li>○ <i>What tools could help to engage with these texts to support the advancement of human rights-based approaches to mental health?</i></li> </ul>
10:05 – 11:20 (15 minutes)	<b>Q&amp;A Exchange</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderated by <b>Dévora Kestel</b></li> </ul> <p><i>Opportunity for panelists to reflect and respond to each others remarks and respond to any questions in the audience.</i></p>
10:05 – 10:30 (10 minutes)	<b>Ask the Audience</b> <p><i>Discussion Questions (in-person and Slido):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Which texts do you find the most relevant for advancing mental health reform?</i></li> <li>○ <i>Which texts do you find are most underused, but could be supportive in advancing reform?</i></li> <li>○ <i>What tools do you use to engage with these texts?</i></li> </ul>



<b>10:30 – 10:40</b> (10 minutes)	<b>HEALTH BREAK</b>
<b>PART 2: Implementation: Challenges, Solutions, and Good Practices</b>	
<b>10:40 – 11:05</b> (25 minutes)	<p><b>Panel: Barriers and good practices in translating international texts into domestic reform</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Moderated by <b>Rabih EI-Chammay</b></li></ul> <p><i>Each panelist will provide approximately 3 minutes of opening remarks, followed by 15 minutes of moderated discussion.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Bernard Jacob</b>, Coordinator of Psychiatric Reform, Belgium (Paris)</li><li>○ <b>Frances Priscilla Cuevas</b>, National Mental Health Program Manager, Ministry of Health, The Philippines (virtual)</li><li>○ <b>Taha Sabri</b>, Chief Operating Officer, TASKEEN, Pakistan (virtual)</li></ul> <p><i>Guidance for Panelists' Opening Remarks:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Provide a snapshot of domestic mental health reform in your country and the key international texts that supported/are supporting that process.</i></li></ul> <p><i>Discussion Questions for Panelists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>What are some of the barriers to the implementation of international texts?</i></li><li>○ <i>How can some of the good practices discussed during the panel session be applied in different contexts?</i></li><li>○ <i>In what ways can the international community better support domestic implementation of international texts? What tools or solutions are needed?</i></li></ul>
<b>11:05 – 11:20</b> (15 minutes)	<p><b>Q&amp;A Exchange</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Moderated by <b>Rabih EI-Chammay</b></li></ul> <p><i>Opportunity for panelists to reflect and respond to each others remarks and respond to any questions in the audience.</i></p>
<b>11:20 – 11:30</b> (10 minutes)	<p><b>Ask the Audience</b></p> <p><i>Discussion questions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>What are some of barriers to the implementation of international texts?</i></li><li>○ <i>What are some examples of best practices you have used to support reform efforts that you think could be applicable in different contexts?</i></li><li>○ <i>What solutions are needed for the international community to better support domestic implementation of international texts?</i></li></ul>
<b>Part 3: Discussion - Translating Words into Action</b>	
<b>11:30 – 11:40</b>	<p><b>Presentation of Recommendations</b></p> <p>Provide an overview of the key recommendations and ideas from this workshop to be included in the synthesis document that will be shared with Ministers during the high-level roundtable.</p>



<b>11:40 – 11:55</b>	<b>What We Heard</b>  Moderators and virtual facilitators will provide a debrief of the key themes and messages discussed and how they will be integrated into the recommendations for the workshop. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Moderated by <b>Dévora Kestel</b> and <b>Rabih El-Chammay</b></li></ul>
<b>Closing Session</b>	
<b>11:55 – 12:00</b>  (5 minutes)	<b>Closing Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Dévora Kestel</b></li><li>○ <b>Rabih El-Chammay</b></li></ul>