

# WHO SPECIAL INITIATIVE FOR MENTAL HEALTH



## GHANA



- Population of 31 million, majority urban (57.3%)
- 79% literacy, 28% of households have improved sanitation, 93% have clean water, and 81% have electricity
- Life expectancy: 64 years, infant mortality rate: 34 per 1000 live births, maternal mortality ratio: 333 per 100,000 live births
- Leading causes of death are malaria, stroke, and lower respiratory infections
- Relatively low HIV prevalence (1.7%)
- 19% of women report exposure to intimate partner violence
- Concerning trend toward polysubstance use, including marijuana, heroin, and cocaine

## STRENGTHS

- National mental health legislation and governing board
- Well-resourced and functional psychiatric facilities
- Ministry of Health (MoH) policy and strategy to focus on de-centralisation of mental health services for integration with primary health care
- Innovative anti-stigma and awareness campaigns
- Ongoing implementation of WHO's QualityRights Initiative
- Active NGO/CSO movements with many supporting self-help and peer-led interventions
- Substantial mental health research in the country

## CHALLENGES

- Limited mental health services and resources allocated to the northern region
- Most mental health services are centralised in psychiatric hospitals and not integrated with primary health care
- Limited human resources for mental health
- Psychotropic medication shortages with partial funding and challenges to procurement
- Significant mental health treatment gaps, especially for mood and substance use disorders
- Stigma continues to limit help-seeking
- Mental health conditions often attributed to supernatural or spiritual causes
- Ongoing human rights violations against people living with mental health conditions

## GHANA'S DESIGN PROCESS

1

Official communication to the Ministry of Health and its agencies about Ghana's inclusion.

2

Virtual and in person workshops conducted to develop an initial work plan, review the drafts, and cost the priority activities for the first 2 years of implementation.

3

Broader stakeholder group meetings to validate the work plan and the log frame.

4

Implementation set to begin in the third quarter of 2022, following the official launch of the initiative in July 2022.

# MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN GHANA

Ghana has comprehensive mental health legislation (2012) that focuses on integrated, community-based approaches and frames access to care as a human right. However, while frameworks exist to improve mental health services and there are clearly defined needs for community mental health service expansion, an active advocacy community, and mental health research capacity that could contribute to the scale up of services implementation remains a challenge. The majority of people with mental health conditions in Ghana – between 85 and 98% of people in need – either cannot, or do not, access the treatment they require. Additional efforts to increase access to effective interventions and prioritisation of human rights, such as those that have emerged in recent years are needed.

## GHANA SPECIAL INITIATIVE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Ghana was selected to be part of the five year WHO Director General's Special Initiative for Mental Health in 2021, to support systems transformation and scaling up of mental health services. The objectives of the initiative are to improve access to mental health services, increase coverage of mental health services, improve quality of mental health services and advance mental health policy, advocacy and human rights. In Ghana the MoH and its agencies, with support from WHO, seek to ensure 5.2 million more Ghanaians have access to integrated, quality, person-centered mental health care, and that their rights are upheld.

### OUTCOMES

#### 1 Governance and Leadership

Improved governance and leadership for mental health at all levels

#### 2 Health Information System

A strengthened health service information system that includes mental health and informs mental health planning, intervention, financing, and local research needs

#### 3 Service Delivery

Integrated and improved quality mental health services accessible and affordable at all levels of care for an additional 5.2 million people

### OUTPUTS

- A functional Mental Health Authority Board is established
- Regional and district level mental health sub-committees established and resourced in the selected regions
- Mental health review tribunal piloted in selected Regions
- Regional Visiting Committees established and operating
- MoH Communication Strategy for engagements in improving mental health care with stakeholders (e.g. the Parliamentary Select Committee, corporate institutions etc.) across sectors and other health areas is developed and utilised
- Service users are organised and coordinated to deliver advocacy and representation on National, Regional and District structures (i.e. Tribunals, committees, groups, etc.)

- Established comprehensive and cost-effective mental health service information system (modify DHIMS2)
- Robust and relevant research publications supporting mental health policy and services in Ghana

- Mental health services are using a more human rights-based, person-centered approach
- Mental health services framework developed for services to be delivered at each level of care
- Mental health services at the primary and secondary care levels are strengthened and available for more people
- Community based mental health supports are strengthened
- Integrate mental health care across other sectors (emergency response, NCDs, HIV, TB, Malaria, gender, etc.) and healthcare areas

## OUTCOMES

4

### Human Resource

Human resources for mental health has been strengthened to include a competent and adequate skill-mix across all levels of care

5

### Essential Medicines

Sustainable, essential, quality and accessible medicine supplies achieved

6

### Health Financing

Sustainable health financing for mental health is achieved

## OUTPUTS

- Capacity to deliver mental health services has increased
- Staffing norms for equitable distribution of human resources for mental health service delivery have been established and realized
- Road map on distribution of mental health staff across Ghana developed and implemented
- Job descriptions of different cadres of mental health staff enforced

- Psychotropic medicines and supplies integrated into the procurement of Ministry of Health's procurement process
- Essential psychotropic medicines and supplies for Mental Health service delivery available at all levels of care

- Develop plan for sustainable mental health financing
- Mental health services incorporated into NHIS and private insurance packages by 2025 (support cost recovery for services rendered)
- Mental health levy established by 2025
- Increased mental health financing from alternative sources (non-Governmental)
- 3 Private-public-partnership agreements in mental health signed and operational by 2025
- Budgetary allocation made for community mental health interventions by 80% of local assemblies