



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH

STATEMENT BY NIGERIA AGENDA ITEM 13.2: MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL CONNECTION World Health Assembly, 2025

Mental health is integral to overall well-being, productivity, and social cohesion. There is a high burden of mental and neurological disorders across the world with suicide rates and stigma remaining high. We recognize efforts in Ghana and Zimbabwe in expanding mental health services and decriminalization of suicide in Kenya.

Nigeria's Efforts:

1. **Policy and Legislative Reform:**

Nigeria's 2023 Mental Health Act establishes a national framework for mental health promotion, service delivery, and protection of the rights of persons with mental health conditions. Implementation is currently underway with strong multisectoral engagement.

2. **Integration into Primary Health Care:**

Nigeria is working to integrate mental health services into PHC, enabling early detection, referral, and community-based management. Task-shifting approaches and WHO's mhGAP tools are being scaled up.

3. **Stigma Reduction and Social Support:**

The Government is promoting mental health literacy campaigns and working with religious, cultural, and community leaders to reduce stigma and foster social connection as a protective factor.

4. **Youth and Vulnerable Groups:**

Nigeria recognizes the mental health needs of adolescents, survivors of gender-based violence, persons living with disabilities, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). School-based interventions and psychosocial support are expanding.

5. **Human Resources and Infrastructure:**

Efforts are ongoing to increase the number of trained mental health professionals and expand access to services through digital tools, community health workers, and telemedicine.

6. **Data and Research:**

Nigeria supports strengthening mental health surveillance, research, and inclusion of mental health indicators in national health information systems.

Call to Action:

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- WHO and partners should support capacity building for mental health integration into PHC and scale digital mental health innovations.
- Member States should increase mental health budget allocations and prioritize community-based care models.
- The WHA should endorse the importance of social connection and psychosocial well-being in health system resilience and recovery.

Conclusion:

Nigeria views mental health not just as a medical issue, but as a public health and development imperative. We are committed to reshaping the narrative around mental well-being and creating inclusive environments where every individual can thrive.