



Ways that countries can respect people's rights

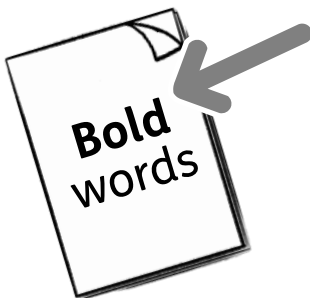
Easy Read version of 'Summary of the outcome of the consultation on ways to harmonise laws, policies and practices relating to mental health with the norms of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and on how to implement them'



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In this easy read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.

Introduction



The United Nations (UN) is an organisation made up of many countries working together. It works to make the world a safer and better place.



The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is the part of the United Nations that works for **human rights** around the world.

Human rights are basic rights and freedoms that should happen for every person in the world.



We wanted to know how countries could change their laws and ways of working with **people with psychosocial disabilities** to fit in with the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**.



Psychosocial disabilities are disabilities that come from a mental health issue.



The **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** is an agreement about the rights of people with disabilities by the countries of the world.



We asked a group of experts what they thought.

We also asked:



- The countries of the United Nations.



- Human rights organisations around the world.



- Organisations of people with disabilities around the world.



We met to discuss what people said and to agree what to do next.

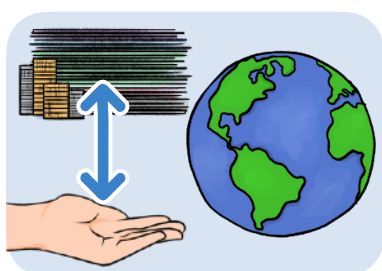


This is a report of that meeting.

What needs to change



Lots of problems around the world mean that the rights of people with psychosocial disabilities are not respected.



Not being equal

There is a big gap between rich and poor people in many countries.



People are often treated differently because they are poor or because of their sex, colour or disability. This is wrong and unfair.



Poverty and unfair treatment affect people's mental health.



Bad attitude

People often have a bad attitude towards people with psychosocial disabilities.



Bad mental health services

Many countries have old fashioned mental health hospitals.



Many countries do not have enough good quality mental health services for people living in their local communities.



Many people with psychosocial disabilities are given medication that they do not need.



Too many services just give people some medicine without looking at what was causing their mental health condition.

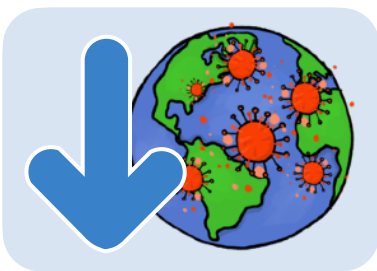


Laws

Too many countries have old laws that stop people with psychosocial disabilities getting their rights.



Many countries still have laws that say that people with psychosocial disabilities do not have to agree to the treatment that they are getting.



COVID-19

COVID-19 made people's general health and mental health worse.



It led to many more people asking for help.

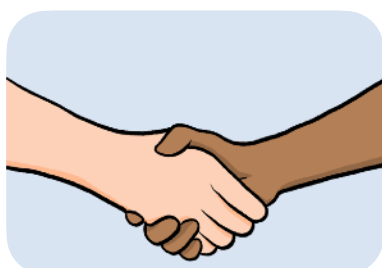


It also made it harder for mental health services to do their work.

How we should work differently



Mental health should be one of the most important issues for the world.



We need to work together to make sure that mental health is as important as physical health.



It is important that countries provide mental health services that respect people's rights.

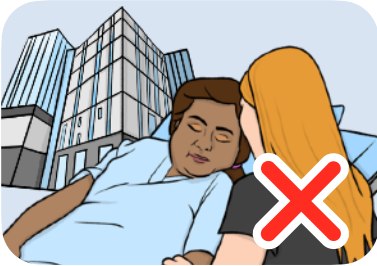


We need more people to check that mental health services are working properly.



Countries need to do more to change people's attitudes to people with psychosocial disabilities.

Living in the community



People should not be made to live in mental health hospitals.



People have the right to live in the community.



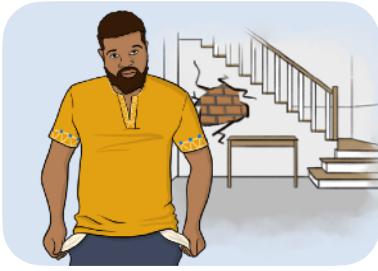
Countries should give more money to community mental health services.



Countries can save money by not making people with psychosocial disabilities live in hospitals.



Money that is used to pay for mental health hospitals could be used to provide support and services for people in their local communities instead.



Problems with mental health are often caused by poverty, poor education, poor housing and not feeling safe.



Dealing with mental health means dealing with all these issues that are important to people too.



The WHO

The **WHO** wrote new guidelines about ways to treat people with psychosocial disabilities, to respect their rights and make their health better.



WHO stands for the World Health Organisation. It is the part of the United Nations that looks at the health of people around the world.



The WHO thinks that countries should:

- Give more money to mental health and social care services that respect people's rights.
- Let people with psychosocial disabilities make decisions for themselves.





- Collect more information about people with psychosocial disabilities.



- Give information to people with psychosocial disabilities about the services they can have in their local communities.

Having a voice

Many organisations of people with psychosocial disabilities are helping people to:



- Help to explain how services need to change.



- Be involved in planning and checking services.



- Support each other.



- Take control over their own treatment and services.



- Make their own choices.



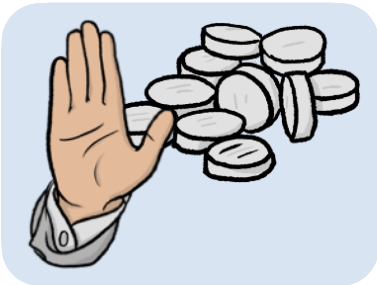
- Speak up about what they want, so that they don't have to go to court to get their rights.



Peer-respite is where people with psychosocial disabilities support each other to have a short break and recover.



It is hard to get good staff to support the peer-respite service.



Countries should stop recommending certain medicines for people with psychosocial disabilities.



Prisons

In prison, people with psychosocial disabilities are likely to suffer bullying and violence.



Prison staff need more training to know how to support people with psychosocial disabilities.

How laws should work differently



Most countries have old laws that do not give people with psychosocial disabilities all their rights.



Countries should change laws so that:

- People with psychosocial disabilities get the same rights as everyone else.



- Money should not make it harder for people to have the same support and services.



- People have to agree to any treatment that they are offered.



Countries need to do this first, otherwise they will not be able to improve services for people.



The WHO and UN Human Rights are writing new guidelines for laws that protect the rights of people with psychosocial disabilities.



Countries should have laws which say that:

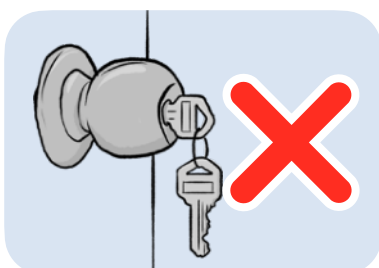
- Everybody has the same rights.



- People with psychosocial disabilities should be able to make decisions for themselves.



- People who have used mental health services should help to design new services.



- People should not be locked away from other people because of a psychosocial disability.



- There should be good quality mental health services in the local community.



- People with psychosocial disabilities should also be able to go to court to get their rights.



Gerard Quinn

Gerard Quinn is the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities.

Mr Quinn talked about the history of mental health laws and how these are changing.



He wants the EU not to agree to the part of a suggested new rule that takes away rights for people with psychosocial disabilities.

What some countries are doing



People from different organisations and governments from around the world spoke about what they are doing.



Brazil



- Brazil has laws to include people with disabilities.



- People have a right to mental health, just as they have a right to health.



- The Brazil Government is working for mental health services in the local community.



- There has been training for health workers about the rights of people with psychosocial disabilities.



Portugal



- In Portugal they are changing laws and ways of working so that people with psychosocial disabilities get their rights.



- Portugal is checking mental health services.

They are involving people who use services and their families.



CBM Global Disability Inclusion



CBM Global Disability Inclusion is an independent organisation that works in many countries for the rights of people with disabilities.



In Kenya and Zimbabwe, groups of people with psychosocial disabilities help each other to make decisions and make sure they get their rights.



CBM Global Disability Inclusion works with families and church groups to support people with psychosocial disabilities.



Peru

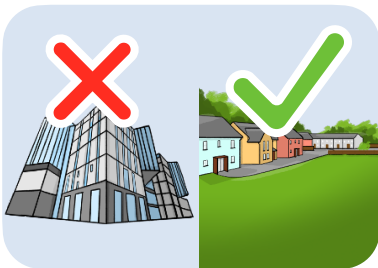
In Peru, various organisations work together to:



- Make the government change the law.



- Set up their own community mental health support organisations.



People in Peru now think that mental health services should be in the community, not in mental health hospitals.

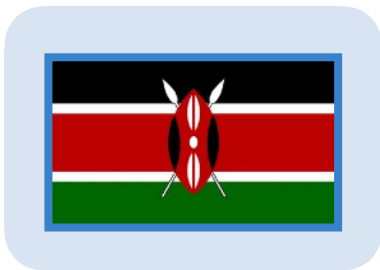


Australia

In Australia, the government has been looking into mental health services.



They have written a report that says there should be a big change to the way services are run.

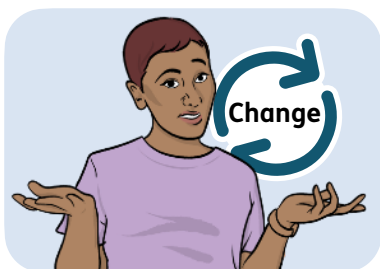


Kenya

Kenya has a new law that says mental health services should be based in the local community.



Unfortunately the law still lets people be put in mental health hospitals against their will.



This needs to change to respect people's rights.



People who use services could speak out more and explain how services could change and be better.



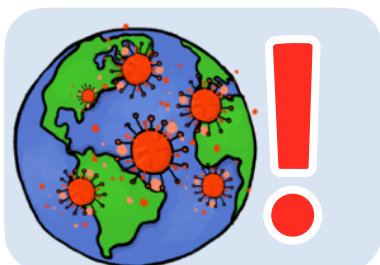
Europe

Some countries in Europe are not giving people with psychosocial disabilities the same rights as everyone else.



But some countries respect that people with psychosocial disabilities can decide things for themselves, and have a right to vote in elections.

Reports from other countries



Many countries talked about how COVID-19 had affected mental health services.



Countries said that they wanted to improve people's mental health. They would do this with better mental health services.



The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was first agreed 15 years ago. It is a shame that people with disabilities are still not getting their rights.



Countries asked for more guidance about how to change services so that people with psychosocial disabilities get their rights.



There are still some countries that tie people with psychosocial disabilities down with chains.



In some countries most people can't get any mental health services.



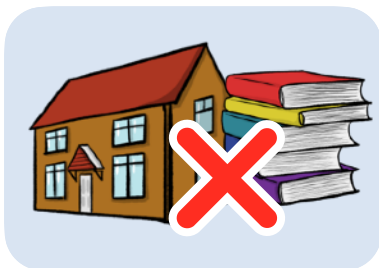
Mental health services need to listen to people with psychosocial disabilities to make things better for them and their needs.

The end of the meeting

We ended the meeting by saying:



- We must change the old ways of working.



- Services like housing, education, and insurance should not be part of a mental health service.



- Countries should realise the harm they have done to people with psychosocial disabilities in the past.

What should happen next

Following this meeting, we say that countries should:



- Change their laws so that everyone's rights are respected.



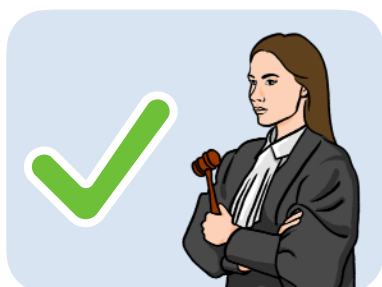
- Treat everyone with a psychosocial disability as an individual person with rights.



- Stop making people live in mental hospitals. Instead countries should provide good quality services so people can live in their local communities.



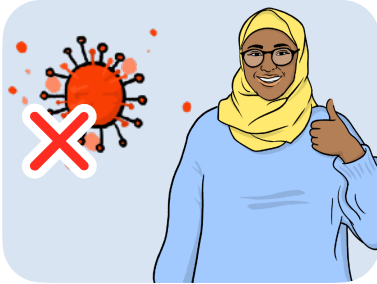
- Always talk about people with psychosocial disabilities with respect.



- Make sure people with psychosocial disabilities can go to court to get their rights.



- Make sure that everyone who needs it has an equal fair chance to get a health service.



- Treat people fairly as life gets back to normal after COVID-19.



- Support independent organisations that work for the rights of everyone.



- Support organisations of people with disabilities.



- Help people who have used mental health services to be involved in planning, making them better, and checking them.



- Check that new laws don't stop the rights of people with psychosocial disabilities being respected.