



NMH/MSD



World Health  
Organization

# An Integrated Approach to Brain Health

## WHO

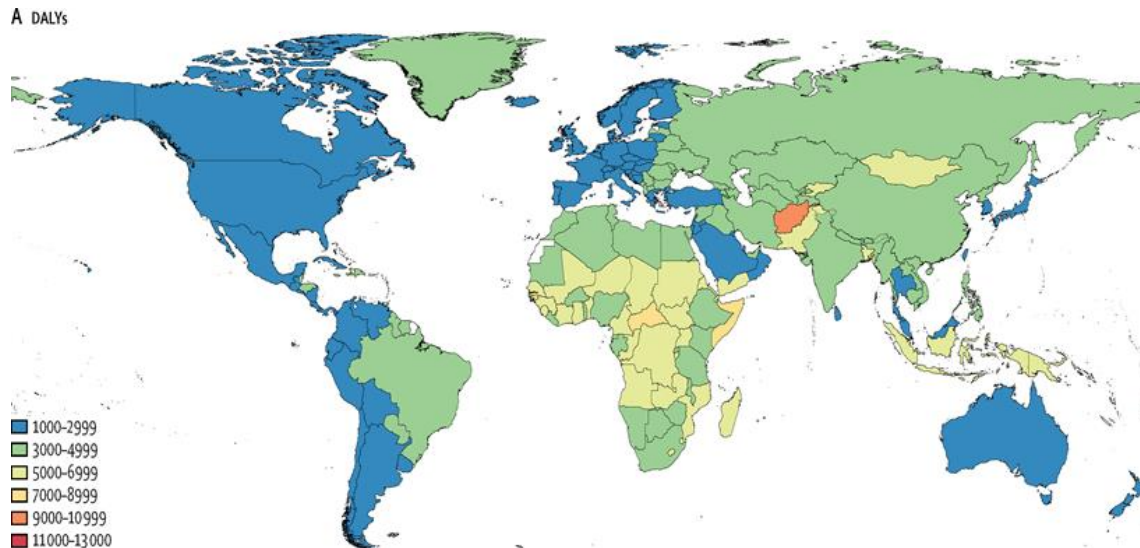
Dévora Kestel  
Director, Department Mental Health and Substance Use, WHO



# Neurological Disorders: Global Context



- Neurological disorders are **the leading cause of disability adjusted life years (DALYs)** and the **second leading cause of death** (9 million deaths per year)
- The largest contributors of global neurological DALYs in 2016:
  1. Stroke (42.2%)
  2. Migraine (16.3%)
  3. Dementia (10.4%)
  4. Meningitis (7.9%).
  5. Epilepsy (5%) - second most common cause of neurologic disorders in southern sub-Saharan Africa

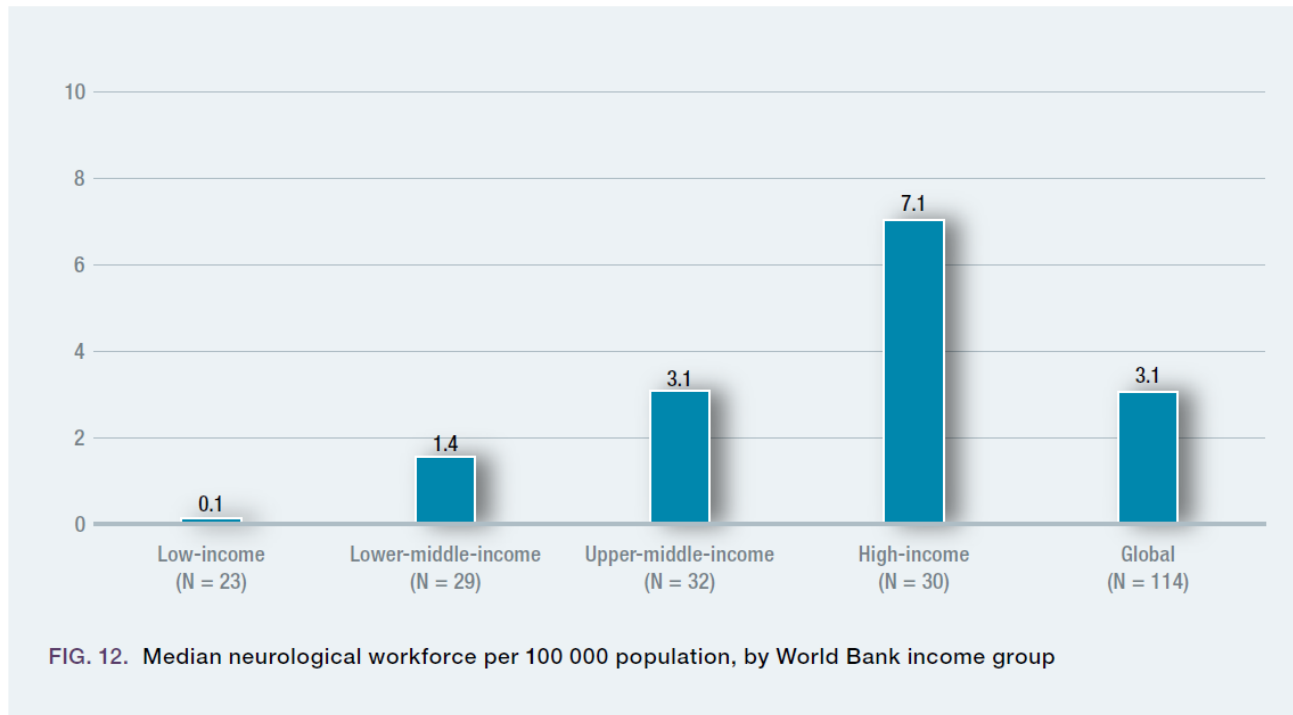


Global burden of brain health conditions by country (in DALYs).

Adapted from *The Lancet Neurology* 2017 16, 877-897

# Resources/Workforce Gap

- Only 28% of low-income countries have dedicated policies for neurological disorders in comparison with 64% of high-income countries
- 4.75 adult neurologists per 100,000 people in high-income countries
- 3 adult neurologists per 10 million people in low-income countries



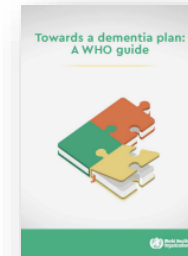
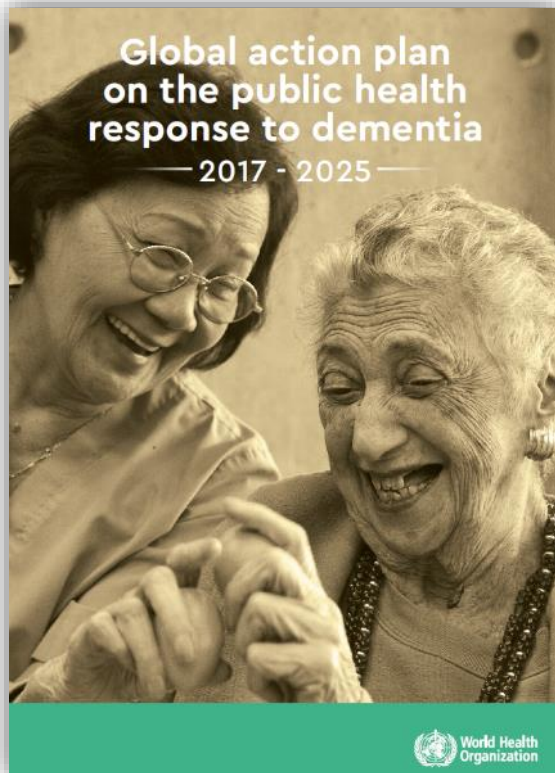
Source: WHO Neurology Atlas

# Supporting Brain Health Agenda so far



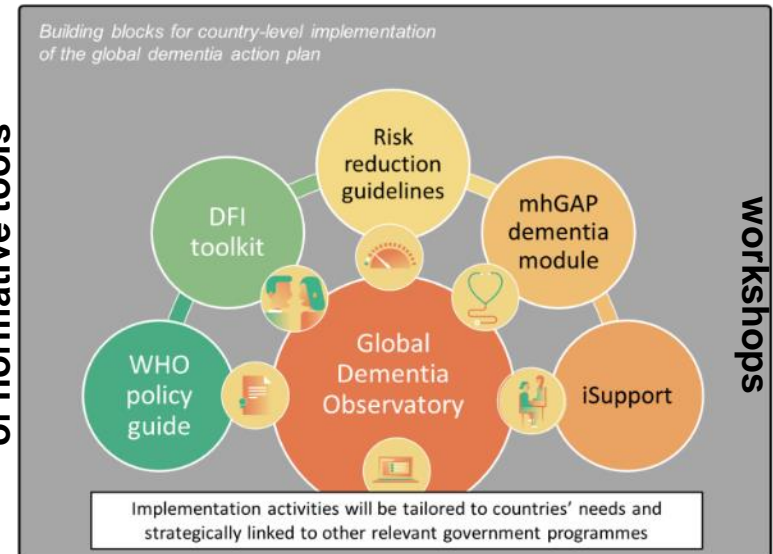
## Global Dementia Action Plan

Supporting the implementation of the global dementia action plan



### 1) Policy dialogue, situational analysis & needs assessment

2) Adaptation & translations of normative tools



### 4) Monitoring & evaluation of progress





# WHO Programme for reducing the epilepsy treatment gap



4

Implementing countries

- Ghana
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Viet Nam

55

Districts / Townships  
Using a multi-component model



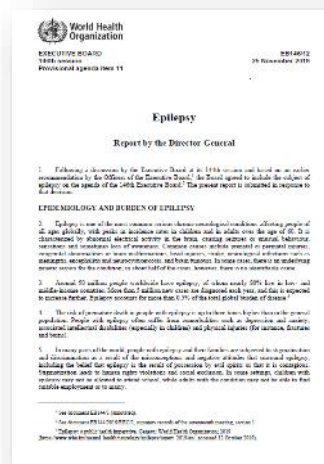
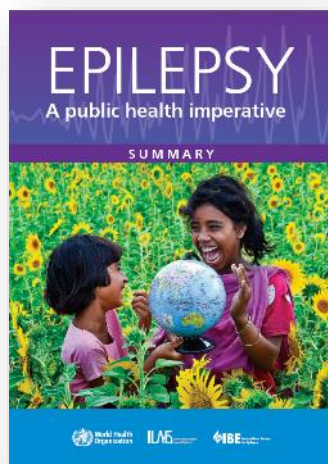
6.5

Million people  
Covered by health  
facilities where  
epilepsy care is  
now available



June 2019

First global report summarizing available evidence on burden of epilepsy and required public health response at global, regional and national levels



Feb 2020

EB146 decision on epilepsy and other neurological disorders



# Children with neurodevelopmental delays, disorders and disabilities

Global goods being developed (Jointly with UNICEF and Autism Speaks):

**Family and parent-mediated interventions**

Programmatic guidance on early interventions and stigma reduction strategies

Global report for children with DDD

*2550 families were trained on CST*



WHO TOOLKIT  
FOR THE CARE AND SUPPORT  
OF PEOPLE AFFECTED BY  
COMPLICATIONS ASSOCIATED  
WITH ZIKA VIRUS



# WHO European Region Perspective

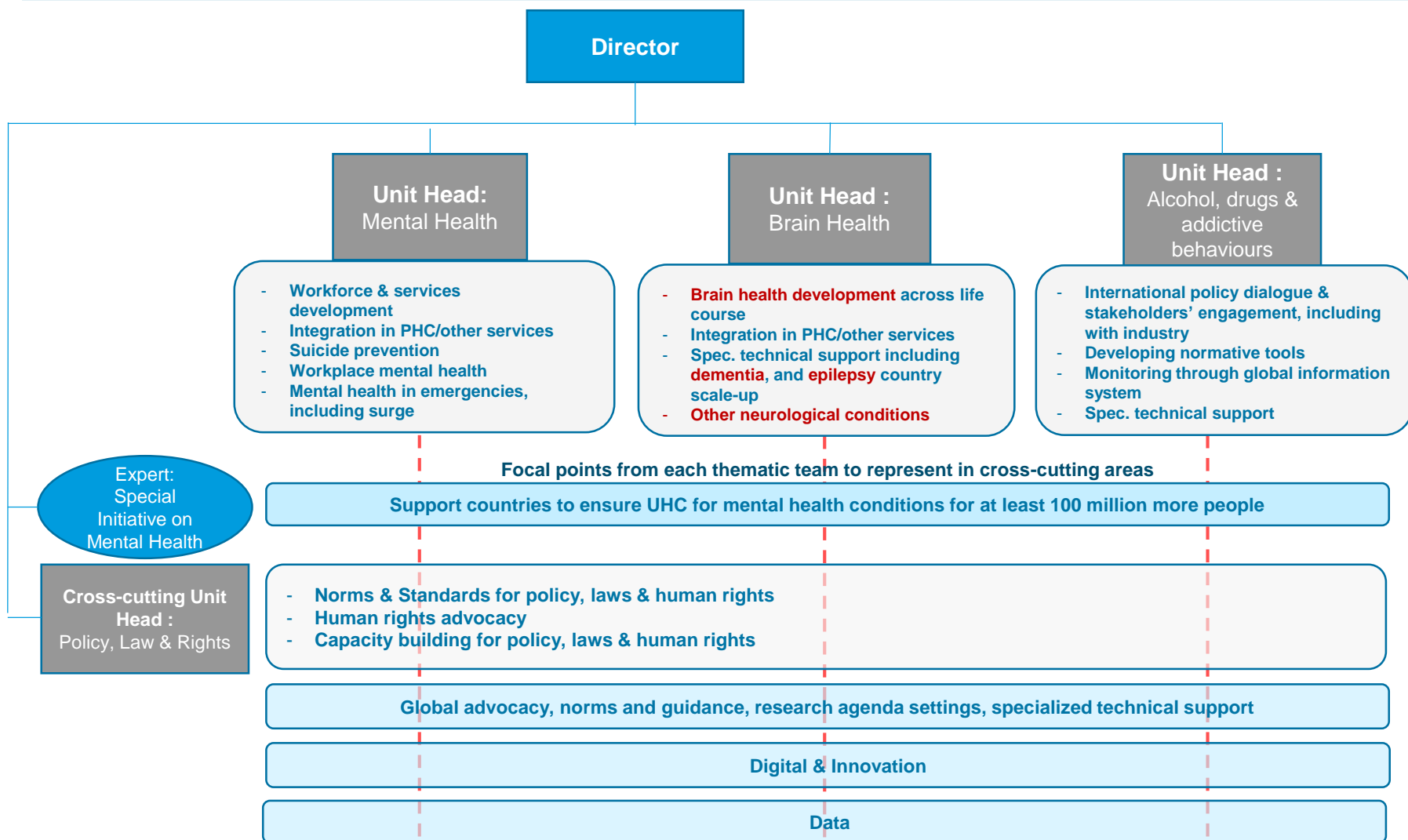


- Compared to other Regions of WHO, EURO has a relatively high disease / economic burden due to brain disorders, e.g. due to rapid ageing of the population
- .. but also relatively greater service capacity, human resources and legislative support for neurological and mental disorders
- Priority work areas for WHO's Regional Office for Europe include:
  - **Stroke** (e.g. integrated CVD prevention and care [HEARTS])
  - **Dementia** (e.g. policy dialogue and development; surveillance [Global Dementia Observatory])
- Key needs and future directions:
  - Increased awareness, policy dialogue and evidence-based advocacy around public health and economic consequences, including the 'investment case' (e.g. headache disorders)
  - Improved detection rates and access to integrated, multi-disciplinary services (e.g. addressing comorbidity in PHC / post-acute care)

# Department of Mental Health and Substance Use

## Mission

The Department's mission is to promote mental health, and human rights for all across the lifespan; to prevent harmful use of alcohol and other substances, to prevent mental, neurological and substance use (MNS) disorders; and to reduce the mortality, morbidity and disability for persons with MNS disorders and associated psychosocial, cognitive and intellectual disabilities.





# WHO's integrated approach to Brain Health

## WHAT?

A **holistic person-centred approach** focused on **promotion, prevention, treatment, care and rehabilitation**

Promoting optimal brain development, cognitive health and wellbeing for all across the life-course

## WHO?

Network of **multisectoral and interdisciplinary** collaboration

## WHEN?

Sustained action **across the life-course**

## HOW?

By addressing **social determinants** of health and **strengthening policies, service delivery, health information systems, technology & innovation**

## WHICH CONDITIONS?

All **neurological & brain health conditions across the life-course**

## WHY?

- #1 cause of disability (11.6% of DALYS)
- #2 cause of mortality (9 million p.a.)
- High socio-economic costs
- Large treatment gaps esp. in LMIC

Physical environments

Community

Family

Enabling environments

# Taking brain health agenda forward

\*\*\*

At EB146, Member States requested WHO to prepare report on “**Synergies in addressing the burden of epilepsy and other neurological disorders**” for review at WHA73 in May 2020.

\*\*\*



World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE BOARD  
146th session  
Agenda item 11

EB146(8)  
6 February 2020

## Epilepsy

The Executive Board, having considered the report on epilepsy,<sup>1</sup> and noting the highly treatable nature of epilepsy, for which urgent action is needed; the many outstanding gaps in the prevention and treatment of the condition; its frequent occurrence as a comorbidity of neurological disorders; and the potential for scaling up implementation of synergistic, proven cost-effective measures to reduce the burden of epilepsy and other neurological disorders, decided:

- (1) to note the global report, *Epilepsy: a public health imperative*,<sup>2</sup> published in 2019;
- (2) to encourage Member States to discuss a possible draft resolution on further action on epilepsy and other neurological disorders for consideration by the Seventy-third World Health Assembly;
- (3) to request the Director-General:
  - (a) to expand the scope of the report to be submitted for consideration by the Seventy-third World Health Assembly, by adding a new section entitled “Synergies in addressing the burden of epilepsy and other neurological disorders;”
  - (b) to develop technical guidance on strengthening country actions against epilepsy and its comorbidities, and make this available on WHO’s website.

Ninth meeting, 6 February 2020  
EB146/SR/9

# WHO BRAIN HEALTH UNIT



## Goals:

To **strengthen policies, service delivery, health information systems, technology, research and innovation** in the area of brain health

To provide technical assistance and guidance on how **to formulate an integrated approach to brain health conditions** focused on **promotion, prevention, treatment, care and rehabilitation**

To **foster increased investment and inter-agency collaboration** globally as well as involvement of different specialties and sectors.



## Thank you

### Contact us

Director: Devora Kestel ([kesteld@who.int](mailto:kesteld@who.int))

Unit Head, Brain Health: Dr. Tarun Dua ([duat@who.int](mailto:duat@who.int)),<sub>11</sub>