

Mental Health And Disabilities



Around the world, depression is one of the leading causes of illness and disability among adolescents and adults, affecting more than 260 million people.

Mental health disorders account for approximately a third of all disabilities globally, estimates the World Health Organisation.

The majority (80%) of the more than one billion people with disabilities across the globe live in low and middle-income countries where factors including poor health and education systems, poverty and unemployment can exacerbate mental health disorders.

It is also true that people with disabilities are more likely to experience poorer mental health compared with people without disabilities. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reports that 32 per cent of adults with disability experience high or very high levels of psychological distress compared with 8 per cent of adults without disability.

Mental health and disability in developing countries

Mental health treatment and supports can be highly effective in helping people to lead healthy, positive lives.

Sadly, many people in developing countries do not have access to these types of services. Some developing countries spend less than 1% of their health budget on mental health.

This means that more than three-quarters of people with mental health conditions in low and middle-income countries receive no treatment for their conditions.

CBM's work

CBM has a long history of work supporting people with disabilities, including people with mental health disorders, in some of the most disadvantaged countries in the world.

Many of these people experience stigma and discrimination, which excludes them from civic participation.

This work includes building the capacity of local healthcare providers, developing and trialling new interventions and advocacy to influence governments to strengthen policies and invest in inclusive mental health services.



Globally, 80% of people with disabilities live in low and middle income countries



Depression is one of the leading causes of illness and disability among both adolescents and adults



Mental health disorders account for approximately one-third of disabilities around the world



People with severe mental disorders have a shorter life expectancy than the general population