



Newsletter 44, dated 30th March 2026



Round Table on Mental Health Legislative Reforms – Part II

The national roundtable on mental health legislation focussed on reviewing the status of mental health legislations and identify practical pathways for implementation. The discussion highlighted key gaps between legislative intent and on-ground realities, including weak enforcement, limitations in rights-based approach, limited institutional mechanisms, resource constraints, and insufficient capacity for implementation and monitoring. Key stakeholders emphasized that while legislation is a critical foundation, meaningful impact depends on coordinated, rights-based implementation.

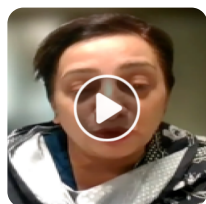


Ms. Amena Aly Kamaal, Member SSD, MoPD&SI, emphasized for implementation of a rights-based mental health legislation, coordinated national efforts and cross-sectoral collaboration, crucial to translate legal frameworks into meaningful impact.

Dr. Asma Humayun, National Technical Advisor, MHSP&C Unit, explained that Pakistan's mental health laws are being reviewed using a rights-based checklist (WHO & OHCHR, 2023) to identify rights-based gaps. In addition a comprehensive matrix is being developed to highlight gaps in capacity, resources, institutions, and legal frameworks.



The federal and provincial representatives made brief presentations on current status of implementation of their respective legislations:



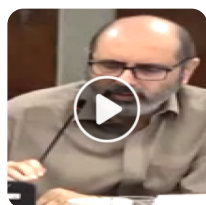
Dr. Soofia Younis
Deputy DG Health, MoNHSR&C



Dr. Chooni Lal
Professor of Psychiatry, Sindh



Dr. Altaf Qadir
Consultant Psychiatrist, Punjab



Dr. Muhammad Saleem
Director, DGHS, KP



Dr. Kamal Khan
BIPBS, Balochistan



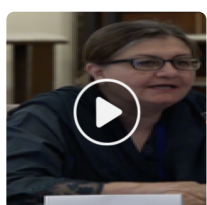
Dr. Anam Najam
Consultant Psychiatrist, AJK

Other stakeholders including members of the working group, WHO, UN organizations and donor agencies also contributed to the discussion.



Dr. Narantuya Jadambaa, cluster lead for non-communicable diseases, WHO, reinforced the need for reform in mental health legislation and its significance in advocacy of mental health to the federal and provincial governments.

Dr. Muhammad Tahir, International Humanitarian Coordinator, UNFPA, highlighted a huge gap in existing legislation, which does not address the mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services during humanitarian crises.



Dr Gul Khalid, National Program Officer Health UN-IOM presented the vote of thanks and expressed their commitment to support mainstreaming MHPSS; integration of mental health into the primarycare; and advocated for policy & legislation inclusion of the needs of the migrants and displaced populations.

Mental Health Strategic Planning & Coordination Unit