



# **Suicide Prevention in Action: Commemorating World Suicide Prevention Day 2021**

## **Investing in Suicide Prevention: Lessons Learned**

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# UNDP's Investment in Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

## UNDP's focus:

Strengthening systems and governance to address the development dimensions of health

- Timely theme for World Suicide Prevention Day - **“Creating hope through action”**
- Historically, mental health has taken a costly back seat to other health and development issues., despite impacting every aspect of our lives.

## Agenda 2030 and the global mental health response:

- The Agenda is unequivocal: mental health is not just a leading health issue but also a sustainable development challenge.
- Mental health is central not only to the right to health but also vital to economies.

## COVID 19 and Mental Health:

COVID 19 is triggering Mental Health conditions and exacerbating existing ones.

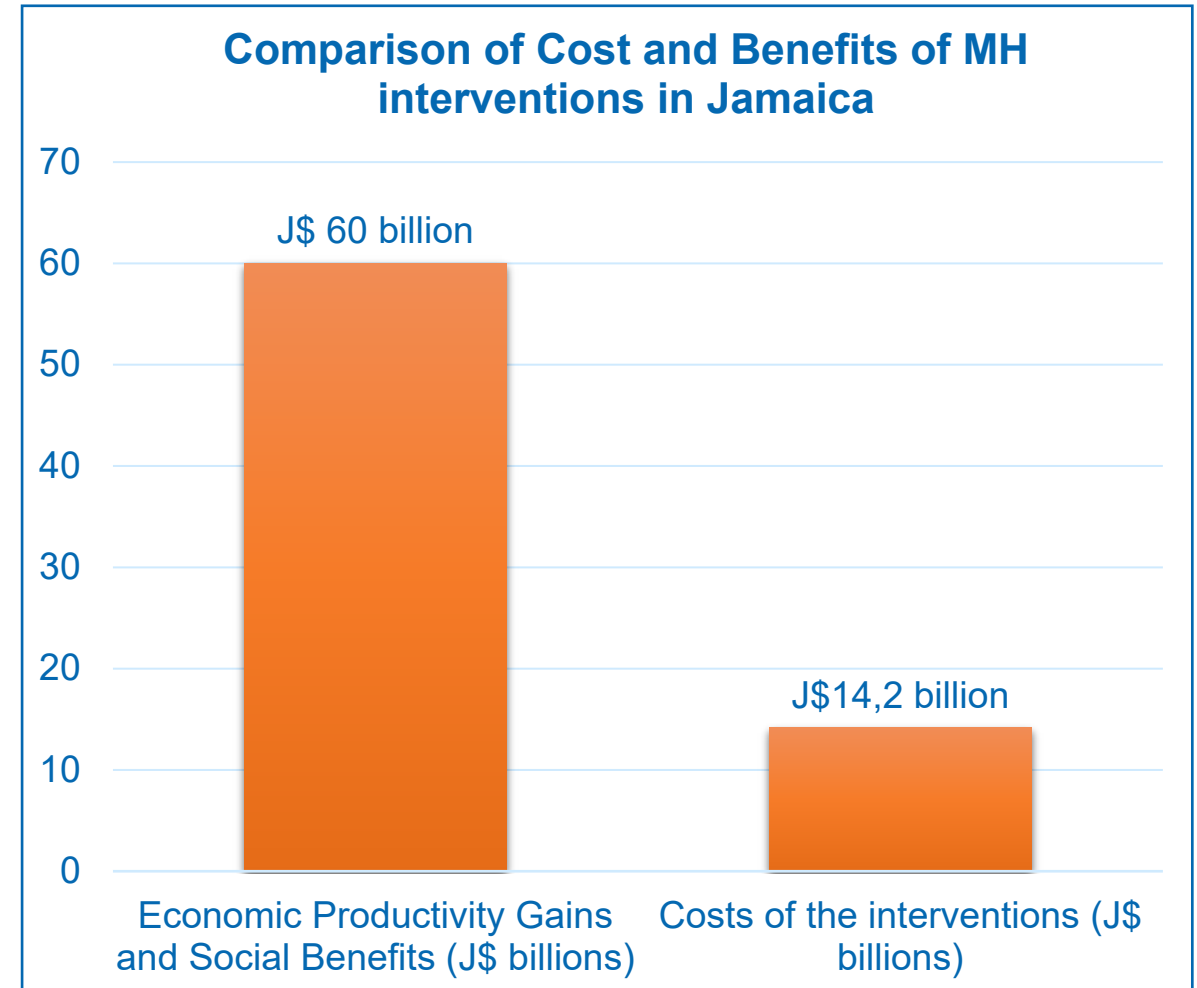
Vulnerable people are most affected: healthcare workers, older adults and people with pre-existing health conditions, children and adolescents, women, and people in humanitarian and conflict settings.

## Financing Mental Health interventions – requires:

- Strengthen decision-makers' access to data on the full costs of mental health inaction, or the costs associated with the 'status quo' response, as compared to the full benefits of implementing proven interventions for transformational change.
- UNDP, WHO and PAHO support the generation of tailored, country-specific economic evidence to guide decisions on mental health spending – by conducting Mental Health Investment Cases for countries.
- Mental Health investment cases quantify the costs of mental health conditions to a country's health system and economy, and model the return on investment for prioritized interventions.
- UNDP-led institutional and context analysis, analyses barriers to action, for example stigma and lack of awareness, as well as windows of opportunity, for example in legislative and planning processes, political leadership and civil society engagement.

# Jamaica Mental Health Investment Case

- Launched in 2020
- Examined anxiety, depression and psychosis.
- From 2019 to 2033, scaling up the selected package of interventions would:
  - support Jamaica to restore 75,883 healthy life years to its population
  - realize J\$60 billion Jamaican dollars in economic productivity gains and social benefits.
  - Cost J\$ 14.2 billion



# Other Mental Health Investment Cases in LAC

UNDP and WHO/PAHO are also advancing Mental Health Investment Cases in **Suriname**, **Peru**, the Philippines, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe and **Guyana**

Guyana and Suriname will break new ground in several ways, including:

- Scope will be expanded to cover additional conditions and interventions including suicide.
- In addition to anxiety, depression and psychosis, will examine bipolar disorder, epilepsy and alcohol dependence.
- In addition to treatment options, will model population-based preventive interventions, including pesticide bans to reduce suicide and school-based socio-emotional learning interventions.
- These cases are situated amongst broader joint support from PAHO and UNDP - will be instrumental in advancing a comprehensive approach in countries and the region.

These cases provides a opportunity to advance the recommendation of UNDP's 2021 Regional Human Development Report "[Trapped: High Inequality and Low Growth in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)", for the expansion of mental health care for victims of violence.

# Lessons Learned



- Mental Health Investment Cases:
  - are not just economic cases
  - do not simply dump data in the hands of government
  - actively build coalitions
  - inform dedicated programmes of support for how to put the case into practice
  - build sustainability into the methodology, for example by creating space for UN country teams, civil society and others to uniquely support in-country actions
  - can be used to inform investment approaches, enhance countries chances of receiving development financing, e.g. United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund to Catalyze Country Action for NCDs and Mental Health.

