

# OPEN PLEDGE ANNEX

**Open Pledge on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Fragile and Humanitarian Settings**

***18-19 March 2024 in Malmö, Sweden***



A Human Right Left Behind: 2nd Nordic Conference on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Fragile and Humanitarian Settings, Malmö (2024)

## Open pledge for the period 2024–2026, proposed by the Nordic MHPSS Network:

In alignment with the [2022 Copenhagen Declaration on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support \(MHPSS\) in Fragile and Humanitarian Settings](#) endorsed at the 1st Nordic Conference on MHPSS in Fragile and Humanitarian Settings, this open pledge is a commitment initiated by participating agencies at the [2nd Nordic Conference on MHPSS in Fragile and Humanitarian Settings](#), which took place in Malmö, Sweden, on 18th – 19th March 2024.

The open pledge is endorsed by the Nordic MHPSS Network Steering Committee, including the Nordic MHPSS Youth Network, as well as respective national MHPSS networks. Whilst open pledges are non-binding in nature, it is encouraged that supporting networks and agencies report back on initiatives taken in line with the recommendations listed ahead of the next Nordic MHPSS Conference gathering in 2026 to document our progress.

---

## A. INTRODUCTION

The open pledge provides examples of clauses and statements that might be used to increase political and financial commitment to and promote quality research and programming in mental health and psychosocial support in fragile and humanitarian settings. It has been developed to support the implementation of the [Nordic Road Map on MHPSS in Fragile and Humanitarian Settings 2022-2030](#).

It further supports the objectives and main themes of the 2nd Nordic conference on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Fragile and Humanitarian Settings. The pledge contains clauses aiming to increase awareness, facilitate cooperation, and launch initiatives on the main outcomes of the conference. All members of the Nordic MHPSS Network, including the Youth Network, are encouraged to adapt and disseminate statements and promote actions in support of the open pledge.

## B. PLEDGE RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of Nordic MHPSS Network and the Youth Network, and other participants of the conference, are encouraged to pledge and collaboratively work towards *the following recommendations*:

### CLAUSE 1 on innovation

- *Recommends* that mental health and psychosocial innovations, should be **locally driven** and **co-created** while listening to a broad range of voices, furthermore discussed, implemented and followed up with local professionals, **people with lived experience and young people**.
- *Recommends* increased funding for innovation, giving room and flexibility to pilot innovations that can be tested before scale-up to **ensure quality** and **evidence-based advocacy**.
- *Urges* the creation of time, space, and tools for innovation, and encourages **collaboration** between different sectors and actors concerned.

### CLAUSE 2 on digitalization

- *Recommends* that where digital interventions are applied in mental health and psychosocial support settings, pre-existing evidence and practice-based findings should be used by researchers and implementers, **building on lessons learned** and refraining from duplication, with a balanced focus between working with assessment and treatment versus with recruitment, engagement and implementation strategies; and stakeholder and system perspectives.
- *Recommends* that digital products used in mental health and psychosocial interventions, strive to be evidence based, contextualized and scalable, considering local culture, language and meaningful engagement of e.g. local professionals, people with lived experience and youth, in its design, implementation and evaluation.
- *Recommends* that digital services and responses strive towards **early intervention**, taking into consideration the social determinants that are associated with the increased risk of mental health problems, and **foster resilience before emergencies or crises occur**.

### **CLAUSE 3 on integration of mental health and psychosocial support into health systems**

- *Advocates* for international and donor communities to invest in **long-term strengthening of national and community mental health and psychosocial support services**, into health care systems and structures, including strengthening national leadership.
- *Recommends* the integration of **community engagement and mental health and psychosocial support** across sectors, by tailoring policies and services to local needs, with a strong emphasis on active community and local professionals' involvement in implementation.
- *Urges* the investment in staff and volunteer care and wellbeing, including training and supervision of local workforce for long term and emergency response to mental health.

### **CLAUSE 4 on mental health and psychosocial wellbeing in the context of climate crisis in humanitarian and fragile settings**

- *Recommends* the integration of climate change and mental health and psychosocial wellbeing and support into policies at all levels, from organizational to national and international, acknowledging the scientific established link between climate change and mental health.
- *Supports* **diversified and integrated funding strategies** for climate resilience, nature preservation and mental health and psychosocial services, beginning with the establishment of a multi-stakeholder advisory group, with strong representation of highly climate change impacted communities.
- *Supports* the creation of a process for developing and implementing climate change and mental health and psychosocial support policies, through a framework centered around **inclusive community leadership** and **partnership with those in the most heavily climate change affected settings**.

### **CLAUSE 5 on gender**

- *Commits* to integrate **intersectionality** in mental health and psychosocial support programming, facilitating gender transformative perspectives and social inclusion, associated with cross sectorial integration and evidence.
- *Supports* the engagement of States around **non-violent and positive masculinities**, and its incorporation into mental health and psychosocial support programming, to foster gender equity.
- *Recommends* ensuring that mental health and psychosocial support intervention design is equally informed and led by women and young girls, **to shift power, strengthen empowerment**, and **engage the wider community** for support.

## **CLAUSE 6 on advocacy within the Nordic region and beyond**

- *Commits* to collaborate on a joint **simplified narrative and common language** around mental health and psychosocial support, and key messages for the various Nordic network actors, with key messages both for programming and policy audiences.
- *Commits* to **share experiences** on how to advocate internally and externally, learn from other networks and share access to spaces of influence.
- *Supports* the **establishment and funding of a Nordic Network Secretariat** to support the Nordic Network Steering Committee and Youth Network with a jointly agreed structure and function, hosting the work of outcome-oriented working groups, including e.g. an advocacy working group on mental health and psychosocial needs, to prepare messages and moments for influence.

## **CLAUSE 7 on financing**

- *Urges* an **increase in the proportion of humanitarian funding** spent on mental health and psychosocial support services, whether as stand-alone programming, or as integrated elements of broader humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding programming.
- *Recognizes* the need for **increased financing of mental health and psychosocial support** programming and services, within and integrated in other thematic areas, such as climate change, education, and emergency disaster response.

## **CLAUSE 8 on youth engagement**

- *Commits* to establishing **clear guidelines, resources, and defined roles** to meaningfully engage youth, especially those from fragile and humanitarian settings, in all stages of mental health and psychosocial support programming, policy and research development, implementation, evaluation, and communication of impact.
- *Advocates* for **flexible funding mechanisms** from donors and grant providers, that prioritizes and supports meaningful youth participation, capacity building, and leadership development.

