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Interviews with UK Global Challenges Researchers and Overseas Collaborators on Embedding Mental Health Impact in Their Work Across Sustainable Development Goals, 2020-2021

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Worldwide, one billion people have a mental health disorder, placing these among the leading causes of ill-health and disability. Moreover, poor mental health disproportionately affects people in Low and Middle Income Countries (LMIC) where there exists also a huge mental health workforce gap. Arguably, mental health is a right and tackling poor mental health is also a means of facilitating sustainable socio-economic development. Global Mental Health aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 3: 'Good Health and Well-Being,' specifically 3.4: 'By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being.' Our ambition is to trigger a step-change in how the research community thinks about where, how and by whom mental health in LMICs can be impacted to benefit people experiencing poor mental health. Specifically, we believe there is untapped potential for global researchers to impact mental health whilst delivering their core (non-mental health) project aims, and that this can be done without significant resource implications. Therefore, to accelerate global action on mental health our long-term aim is to produce a Global Mental Health Impact Framework with potential for use in all research in developing countries. Our first stage project will establish a foundation and pathway towards this long-term aim by creating a beta version of the Impact Framework, based on arts and humanities methodologies first, ready for future testing and development across a broad range of GCRF projects in a second stage application. At this second stage, we will also develop an implementation plan to support funders, researchers and LMIC partners to understand and use the Framework. The Challenge Cluster brings together 16 GCRF projects funded by the AHRC, ESRC and MRC, a University of Leeds (UoL) AHRC-GCRF Network Plus, and UoL AHRC-led GCRF Hub totalling over £6.5 million and collaborator from outside the academy who has worked on non-GCRF ODA-oriented projects. A huge advantage of the Cluster is that it builds on the activities and resources of Praxis: Arts and

Humanities for Global Development: an AHRC-led GCRF Hub at the UoL. We will develop our own Praxis Nexus approach to bring together what has been found and engage with researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers to accelerate impact on a cross-national scale commensurate with the significance of the GCRF programme. Measurable, realistic, achievable objectives for the first-stage 12-month project are to:-

1. Complete a scoping review of (i) material practices and (ii) implicit and explicit mental health activities in non-mental health focused GCRF projects funded to date;
2. Complete a report outlining the basis for a Global Mental Health Impact Framework around collaborative material practices;
3. Develop and strengthen equitable international academic, policy and practitioner partnerships and build capacity in LMIC and the UK; and,
4. Use this work to assist in developing the agenda and programmes of research to be undertaken in the second stage application. In relation to potential applications and benefits we will:

1. Raise the awareness of UK and LMIC funders, researchers and organisations that they may be missing 'low hanging fruit' opportunities to impact mental health in their portfolios and projects;
2. Provide them with a basic understanding of how Global Mental Health challenges can be conceptualised and identified in non-mental health focused projects; and
3. Explain ways that diverse projects could achieve mental health impact at micro, meso and macro levels as part of their routine activities without overstressing project expertise or resources; and,
4. Stimulate LMIC organisations and government departments to think about how they might integrate mental health impact across their diverse agendas and projects.

DATA DESCRIPTION (ABSTRACT)

26 online interviews were conducted of which 22 are available in this archive. One female UK interviewee did not audio-record clearly enough for accurate transcription; and one female UK interviewee and two non-UK interviewees - one man, one woman - gave consent for analysis in the original project but not for making their anonymised transcript more widely available. UK Sample Gender: 3 men, 11 women (2 women interviewed together) GCRF Strategic Portfolio Theme: 1 Education, 7 Health, 1 Cities, 2 Security, 1 Food, 1 Environment Research Council: 3 AHRC, 1 BBSRC, 1 EPSRC, 2 ESRC, 3 MRC, 3 NERC, 0 STFC World Region (Some sampled projects covered more than one region): 5 Africa, 4 Americas, 2 SE Asia, 1 Europe, 1 Eastern Mediterranean, 4 Western Pacific, 2 Global Non-UK Sample Gender: 4 men, 9 women GCRF Strategic Portfolio Theme: 3 Education, 7 Health, 0 Cities, 1 Security, 2 Food, 0 Environment Research Council: 2 AHRC, 1 BBSRC, 2 EPSRC, 2 ESRC, 3 MRC, 1 NERC, 0 STFC, 2 Not Applicable World Region (Some sampled projects covered more than one region): 2 Africa, 3 Americas, 3 SE Asia, 1 Europe, 1 Eastern Mediterranean, 3 Western Pacific, 1 Global