Introduction
As elsewhere, mental, neurological, and substance use disorders are highly prevalent and burdensome in the Pacific island countries and areas (PICs). The resources that have been provided to tackle the huge burden are still insufficient, inequitably distributed, and inefficiently used, which results in majority of people with these disorders receiving no care at all. Launched in 2007, PIMHnet has been established to overcome challenges PICs face in the area of mental health. Working together, network countries are able to draw on their collective experience, knowledge and resources in order to promote mental health and strengthen mental health systems that provide effective treatment and care.

The first stage of PIMHnet was funded by the New Zealand Aid Programme. Eighteen countries joined as members of the network, and during this period, much progress was made in the region. Main achievements include the development of national mental health policy/plan in several countries, finalization of the detailed country situation analysis, establishment of the psychiatric diploma course, establishment of community based mental health facilities in some countries, provision of number of trainings in most of the countries, etc.

The second stage has started from 2013, funded again by the New Zealand Aid Programme to further strengthen the mental health field capacity in the PICs, building upon the developments in the first stage. The strategic areas of the second stage are:
1. Supporting the development of mental health policy/plan and/or legislation
2. Strengthening of evidence and information on mental health
3. Building mental health capacity of the health services workforce and mental health service delivery
4. Facilitating to build partnerships and encouraging more cooperation and collaboration between partners

Vision of PIMHnet
The people of Pacific Island countries enjoying the highest standards of mental health and well-being through access to effective, appropriate and quality mental health services and care.

Mission of PIMHnet
To achieve this vision, PIMHnet will facilitate and support cooperative and coordinated activities within and among member countries that contribute to sustainable national and sub-regional capacity in relation to mental health.
Purpose and priorities of PIMHnet

The WHO Pacific Islands Mental Health Network (PIMHnet) brings together countries that share geographical, social and cultural ties, and also experience similar issues or difficulties in the area of mental health. The priority areas identified by countries within the network are:

- Advocacy for mental health throughout the Pacific and within countries
- Human resources and training
- Policy, legislation, planning and service development
- Access to psychotropic medicines
- Research and information

PIMHnet mode of operation

Participation in the network requires high-level commitment from ministries of health, as well as the official appointment of a mental health focal point and the development of an in-country team. Network countries are then required to meet on regular basis to develop workplans and to provide a brief report of outputs and outcomes annually.

The mental health focal point in each country provides coordination and liaison between the PIMHnet members and strategic partners, as well as with the network secretariat and the in-country team. Each in-country team could include mental health clinicians and professionals; those involved in mental health legislation, policy, planning, financing and programme management; nongovernmental organizations and other relevant provider organizations; service users and/or service user organizations; educators, academician and their host institutions in the field of mental health; and representatives from communities, such as elders, leaders and traditional healers.

Countries are being supported by the network secretariat based at the WHO Suva office, with the support from WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific and WHO Headquarters and its strategic partners.

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