

Global Mental Health Peer Network



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE

Strengthening the voice of persons with lived experience globally through empowerment and inspiring respect and acknowledgement of their experiences, views and opinions as valued and equal citizens of the world

Global Mental Health Peer Network (GMHPN)

The GMHPN is a global mental health care user organization that functions as an entity of its own that strives to ensure that the voice of persons with lived experience, wherever in the world, have the platform to share their experiences, views and opinions in a well-established and sustainable structure.

Definition: *Mental health care users – individuals, with psychosocial disability/ mental health problems/ disorders, who make use of any form of mental health care services, not necessarily restricted to medication*

1. Purpose of the Executive Committees

The Executive Committees will provide strategic direction and leadership to ensure that the GMHPN achieve its objectives in line with its principles.

Two principles are fundamental to the GMHPN:

- Working together with all stakeholders involved to affect the desired change
- The views, opinions and experiences of persons with lived experience reflect the change desired

Through the principles, the objectives of the GMHPN are to:

- Create communities where persons with lived experience are valued as equal citizens of the world, free from stigma, inequality and inequity
- Give a voice to the voiceless and create a platform where what persons with lived experience say and share, matters
- End isolation from the world and connect user groups and movements globally to form a community of experts by experience and who are empowered to self-advocate and advocate on a broader and global scale

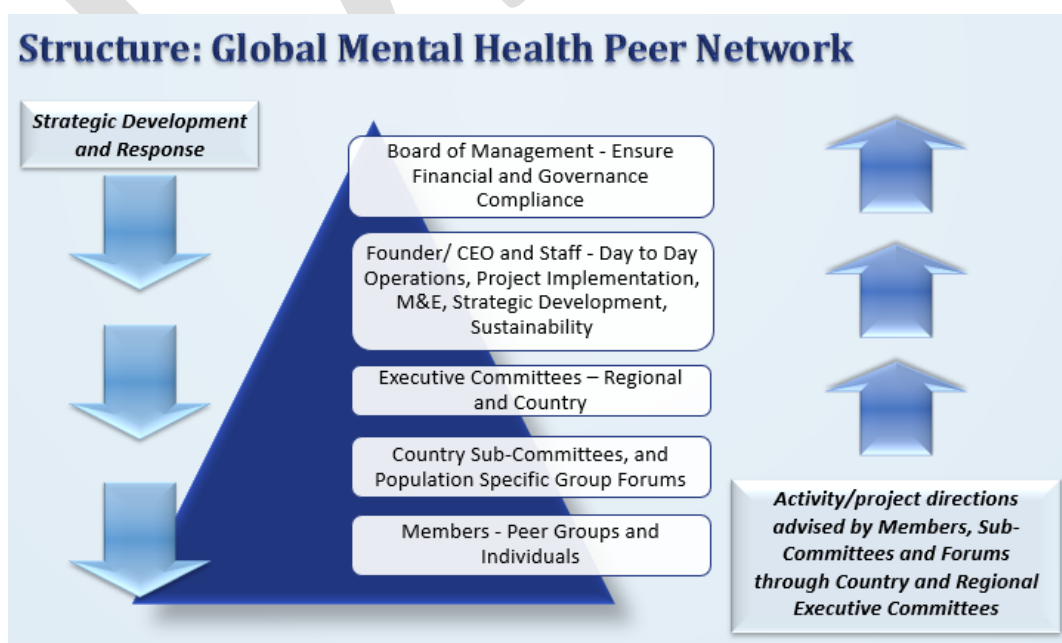
The GMHPN objectives will be achieved through key activities:

- Developing leadership in mental health through the Executive Committees
- Creating platforms where mental health care users can share experiences, views, opinions and ideas, through the GMHPN website, social media, newsletter, participation in engagement opportunities, such as discussion platforms both online and face-to-face gatherings
- Building partnerships with stakeholders across the globe
- Participate in global initiatives with partners and stakeholders
- Linking user groups and movements with each other and developing a database of user groups and movements to provide peer support, knowledge sharing, sharing of evidence-based information and collaborative campaigning opportunities
- Empowerment of mental health care users through the GMHPN website, social media, newsletter, participation in engagement opportunities, development of infographics and online training, by:
 - Dissemination of mental health related information on evidence and research, innovations, new developments and opportunities in mental health; and
 - Improving human rights literacy
- Promotion of recovery stories, both in written and video formats, shared on online platforms and through public engagement opportunities

2. Structure of the GMHPN

The GMHPN will strive towards establishing a **well-represented global structure** that consider diversity within country settings, and in which the organisation will operate.

The **Global Office is based in South Africa** and managed by the Founder of the GMHPN. The Global Office is responsible for the day-to-day operations; project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; sustainability and donor relations; coordinating mental health care user groups and the structural committees.



Two key international structures exist:

- Regional Executive Committee (*Representation from 6 Regions: African; Americas; South East Asia; European; Eastern Mediterranean; and Western Pacific Regions*)
- Country Executive Committee (*Representations from Countries*)

Country-level structures exist:

- Mental health care user groups in countries are linked to the GMHPN as members and to its representative/s in the Country Executive Committee

****Executive Committee Members serve in a voluntary capacity.***

3. Country Executive Committee

The **Country Executive Committee** consists of representatives from various countries and serve as key persons who represents mental health care users in their respective countries.

The membership of the *Country Executive Committee* will commit to:

- Attending all scheduled meetings (online and in-person), and if necessary nominate a proxy
- Wholeheartedly championing the GMHPN within and outside of work areas
- Sharing all communications and information across the GMHPN Executive Committee members
- Making timely decisions and taking action so as to not hold up the project
- Notifying members of the GMHPN Executive Committee, as soon as practical, if any matter arises which may be deemed to affect the development of the GMHPN

Members of the *Country Executive Committees* will expect:

- That each member will be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner
- To be given reasonable time to make key decisions
- To be alerted to potential risks and issues that could impact the project, as they arise
- Open and honest discussions, without resort to any misleading assertions
- Ongoing 'health checks' to verify the overall status and 'health' of the GMHPN

Profiles of Country Executive Committee Members

COUNTRY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS comply with the following criteria:

- Are mental health care users/ persons with lived experience who are making use of mental health care services of any kind, not restricted to pharmacological interventions
- Are fluent in the English language
- Are involved in mental health advocacy work in their country to any degree of involvement and not necessarily at a large scale
- Are familiar with mental health structures within their country
- Are passionate and dedicated to the cause of mental health and improving the quality of life of all mental health care users

Key Role of Country Executive Committee Members

- Assist the Global Office in identifying local mental health care user groups/movements and facilitate communication between the groups/movements and the Global Office, where these groups and movement could be signed up as members/partners of GMHPN, and added to the database
- Assist the Global Office in the establishment of Country Sub-Committee/s
- Assist the Global Office with sourcing of content for its website, newsletter and social media and online platforms – news related to mental and human rights in the country, articles on activities of mental health care user groups/movements, recovery stories, etc.
- Community intelligence – provide the Global Office and the Regional Executive Committee with information on mental health care users’ needs, challenges, views and opinions in the country on matters that impact on their lives (be the “*eyes and ears*” on the ground)
- With the assistance of the Regional Executive Committee, develop short, medium and long-term recommendations in addressing challenges and needs of mental health care users that considers country context
- Build good standing relationships with stakeholders in the country
- Representing GMHPN at country-level engagement platforms, events, and other opportunities, such as conferences and relevant consultation processes
- Provide inputs into mental health related documents from lived experience perspectives
- Collaborate with stakeholders and partners in implementation of initiatives
- Participate in quarterly online meetings with the Global Office and Regional Executive Committee
- Attend annual face-to-face meeting of the Executive Committees (once funding secured to cover travel and accommodation of delegates)
- Ongoing liaison with the Regional Executive Committee

4. Regional Executive Committee

The **Regional Executive Committee** consists of representatives from 6 regions (*African; Americas; South-East Asia; European; Eastern Mediterranean; and Western Pacific Regions*) and serve as key persons who represents mental health care users in their respective region.

The membership of the *Regional Executive Committee* will commit to:

- Attending all scheduled meetings (online and in-person), and if necessary nominate a proxy
- Wholeheartedly championing the GMHPN within and outside of work areas
- Sharing all communications and information across the GMHPN Executive Committee members
- Making timely decisions and taking action so as to not hold up the project
- Notifying members of the GMHPN Executive Committee, as soon as practical, if any matter arises which may be deemed to affect the development of the GMHPN

Members of the *Regional Executive Committees* will expect:

- That each member will be provided with complete, accurate and meaningful information in a timely manner

- To be given reasonable time to make key decisions
- To be alerted to potential risks and issues that could impact the project, as they arise
- Open and honest discussions, without resort to any misleading assertions
- Ongoing 'health checks' to verify the overall status and 'health' of the GMHPN

Profiles of Regional Executive Committee Members

REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS comply with the following criteria:

- Are mental health care users/ persons with lived experience who are making use of mental health care services of any kind, not restricted to pharmacological interventions
- Are fluent in the English language
- Are involved in mental health advocacy work in their country and have experience in international engagements and participation platforms
- Are familiar with mental health structures at an international level
- Are passionate and dedicated to the cause of mental health and improving the quality of life of all mental health care users

Key Role of Regional Executive Committee Members

- Country-level intelligence – identify common denominators among countries in terms of matters that impact on mental health care users and escalate these to the Global Office that will assist in developing awareness and advocacy campaigning materials
- Liaise with Country Executive Committee and develop short, medium and long-term recommendations in addressing challenges and needs of mental health care users that considers country context
- Escalate situation analysis and recommendations to the Global Office for strategic development and response
- Provide inputs into mental health related documents from lived experience perspectives
- Representing GMHPN at international engagement platforms, events, and other opportunities, such as conferences and relevant consultation processes
- Collaborate with stakeholders and partners in implementation of initiatives

5. Membership Term and Appointments

Members of the Executive Committees will serve a 4-year term. A member to the Executive Committee may be re-elected to serve another 4-year term, with a limit of 8 years in total served on the Executive Committee.

Members to the Executive Committees are appointed through:

- Applications received for vacancies on the Executive Committees
- Nominations received for vacancies on the Executive Committees
- Re-election of existing member/s following a 4-year term (re-elections done by Executive Committees by means of vote)

Applications (including nominations) are screened by the Global Office to ensure compliance with the criteria. Eligible applications will be considered and appointed by the Global Office management.

6. Termination of Membership

The GMHPN Executive Committee membership can be terminated by:

- The member submitting a **written resignation** to the Global Office with an explanation as to why the member wishes to resign from the Executive Committee
- The member being **inactive for a period of more than 3 months** (unless a leave of absence had been awarded for a said period of time)
- The member **failed to attend 3 consecutive meetings** (unless the member submitted a valid reason for non-attendance)
- The member **not responding to communication** from the Global Office or project partners or **failed to meet deadlines** for project specific targets, **despite follow up communication** (unless the member submitted a valid reason for inability to respond to communication or where the member submitted a valid reason for being unable to participate in a said project or partnership)
- The member bringing the GMHPN into **disrepute**
- **Chronic illness** deemed the member incapable of fulfilling their role as an Executive Committee member

The termination of membership, resulting from any of the above, will be done via an official letter to the member in question from the Global Office stipulating the reason/s for termination.

The member in question, whose membership had been terminated, resulting from any of the above, may appeal the decision of termination by submitting a letter of appeal that provides a motivation as to why membership should continue. This letter of appeal must be sent to the Global Office within **30 days** of receipt of the official letter of termination from the Global Office. Such an appeal will be presented to the GMHPN Board of Management for a final decision and the outcome communicated to the member in question within **14 days** from the date that the letter of appeal had been received.

7. Leave of Absence

The GMHPN acknowledges that members health and wellbeing is of utmost importance and that there may be times when health and wellbeing should take priority. A member of the Executive Committee, may request Leave of Absence, should he/she experience a personal crisis and need time out to focus on their health and wellbeing. A member will decide the length of Leave of Absence required. An application for Leave of Absence can be made via email request to the Global Office: globalmentalhealthpeernetwork@gmail.com

8. Amendment, Modification or Variation

This **Terms of Reference** may be amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by the GMHPN Executive Committee members.

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