

New Report calls for Urgent Legal Reforms in 25 Countries That Still Criminalise Suicide

United for Global Mental Health is calling for countries across the globe to decriminalise suicide.

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, September 11, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- 25 countries still



At United for Global Mental Health, we understand that criminalising suicide does not deter people from taking their lives. It does, however, deter them from seeking help when they need it most"

Sarah Kline, co-founder and CEO, UnitedGMH

criminalise suicide, where individuals who attempt to take their own lives face arrest, prosecution, and even imprisonment. United for Global Mental Health is calling for countries across the globe to decriminalise suicide to make sure that no one is deterred ever again from reaching out for help.

A new report by United for Global Mental Health, *Decriminalising Suicide: Reducing Stigma, Saving Lives*, researched together with Trust Law, Thomson Reuters Foundation's global pro bono legal programme, sets out a clear roadmap for policymakers, mental health advocates, and legal experts committed to ending the criminalisation

of suicide.

This report draws upon expert insights from leading organisations such as the World Health Organisation (WHO), the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP), Lifeline International, and United for Global Mental Health to emphasise the urgent need to decriminalise suicide worldwide. The report also features:

Country profiles of 23 countries that still criminalise suicide, detailing legal frameworks, penalties, the impact of suicide's illegality, any efforts to reform this legislation, and pathways for changing the law. These profiles can be used as part of campaigning efforts to advocate for legislative change.

In-depth case studies on how and why suicide was decriminalised in Guyana, Cayman Islands and India.

Suicide is a global public health crisis, with over 720,000 dying by suicide every year. The

criminalisation of suicide not only increases stigma but also prevents individuals from seeking life-saving help. It is time for countries to take a stand, reform their laws, and align with modern, compassionate approaches to mental health.

There is growing momentum across the globe for prevention, not punishment. In the last 18 months, Ghana, Guyana, Pakistan and Malaysia have reformed their mental health acts to decriminalise suicide and take proactive steps towards mental health reforms. The report features these in-depth case studies to provide lessons for other countries looking to take similar steps towards decriminalisation.

Sarah Kline, CEO of United for Global Mental Health said, "At United for Global Mental Health, we understand that criminalising suicide does not deter people from taking their lives. It does, however, deter them from seeking help when they need it most. This report brings together crucial evidence and insights from leading global organisations and experts, advocating for change that will save lives and reduce stigma. It provides 23 country profiles that can be used to campaign for change."

The theme for this year's World Suicide Prevention Day is "Changing the Narrative," we can change the narrative by advocating for policies and legislation that prioritise mental health, increase access to care, and provide support for those in need. We call upon governments, policymakers, and civil society to join the movement to decriminalise suicide, reduce stigma, and build a world where mental health is prioritised and protected.

[Download the report here.](#)

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For more information or interview requests, please contact faith@unitedgmh.org

[About United for Global Mental Health](#)

United for Global Mental Health is an advocacy organisation working with partners across the world to raise awareness, reduce stigma and increase support for mental health across the world. Our vision is for a world where mental health support is accessible to everyone, everywhere without stigma or discrimination.



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United for Global Mental Health

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