More than one billion people in the world – about 15% of the global population – live with some form of disability, half of whom cannot afford health care. 1 in 4 people are affected by a mental disorder at some point in their lives, and depression, in particular, will be the leading cause of disability worldwide by 2030. Research shows that mental health and physical disabilities are inextricably linked. Addressing mental as well as physical health in a holistic context is not only a global public health issue, but a human rights issue and development priority, critical to the achievement of the SDGs.

The event will highlight practical examples, initiatives and interventions to raise awareness on the importance of reaching better health outcomes for those affected by mental health disorders, through universal health coverage (UHC) and engagement in society through cultural life. New and innovative practices will be shared for consideration for promoting empowerment and human rights for persons with disabilities.

With a live performance, examples from regional practices, youth experience and advocacy, the event will focus on the essential process in eradicating stigma, building community, creating opportunities for greater inclusion, and improving health outcomes.