



## Written Inputs for the Preparation of the Zero Draft of the Pact for the Future

### The International Association for Human Values (IAHV)

<https://us.iahv.org/>

- Annelies Richmond, National Director, SKY Campus Happiness, [annelies.richmond@iahv.org](mailto:annelies.richmond@iahv.org)
- Sri Yash Tadimalla, Sky Fellow, [yasht@artofliving.org](mailto:yasht@artofliving.org)

### Chapeau

In an era marked by rapid advancements in technology, alongside escalating conflicts over natural resources, economic disparities, social injustices, and religious and cultural differences, the International Association for Human Values (IAHV) recognizes the urgent need to address these challenges with a renewed focus on human values and stands as a beacon for harmony and pluralism at the global, community and individual levels. The challenges of today, further intensified by the global mental wellbeing crisis, the destabilizing effects of climate change and the polarizing impact of digital media, are profound indicators of the threats to societal harmony and individual wellness, including mental wellbeing.

IAHV's work transcends addressing the symptoms of current crises with an approach which fosters a peaceful and stress free society anchored in individual transformation through evidence-based breathwork and meditation resulting in happy and empowered individuals. It undergo a deep-rooted change in attitudes and behaviors. Such differences are only possible when individuals and appreciate different points of view. By integrating meditation and breathwork as tools for mental well-being and human values into all aspects of life, our goal is to create environments where individuals can see their lives from a broader perspective, thrive, and become powerful agents of social change in their communities and societies.

Through initiatives like the SKY Campus Happiness Program, specifically designed for university populations, IAHV offers tools such as evidence-based breathwork, meditation, yoga, mindful leadership and emotional intelligence training. These practices are essential for developing clarity of mind, fostering resilience, and building community – all crucial in countering societal conflicts and the growing polarization exacerbated by digital media. Established in 1997 by Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, IAHV has been a steadfast advocate for mental well-being and the promotion of human values globally.

In our rapidly evolving world, investing in the role of young leaders and the broader community in shaping a future that prioritizes mental wellbeing and human values is vital. Our response to these challenges must be holistic, grounded in a comprehensive understanding of human nature and the interconnectedness of all life. This approach is key not only in addressing current issues but also in laying the foundation for a future where mental wellbeing and human values are integral to the societal fabric.

The path forward, as envisioned by IAHV, places mental well-being and human values at the forefront. This strategy is essential for achieving a sustainable, harmonious world where every individual has the opportunity to live a fulfilling and peaceful life. As we continue to navigate these complex challenges, IAHV and its programs, like the SKY Campus Happiness Program, will play a pivotal role in aligning our technological advancements with our deepest human values. Our advocacy for policies and practices that emphasize mental well-being, human connection, and global solidarity is unwavering. We are committed to creating a future where technology, education, and leadership development enhance human values and mental well-being, contributing positively to communities and the world at large.

## **Chapter I. Sustainable Development and financing for Development**

Sustainable development and financing for development are increasingly recognized as vital in addressing the global mental well-being crisis. As we strive towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it's essential to acknowledge that mental wellbeing is intrinsically linked to several of these goals, including good health and well-being (SDG 3), quality education (SDG 4), and reduced inequalities (SDG 10). Investing in mental wellbeing services not only promotes individual well-being but also contributes to broader societal and economic stability. This investment is a prerequisite for sustainable development, as mental wellbeing issues can significantly hinder economic productivity, increase healthcare costs, and exacerbate social inequalities. Therefore, financing for development must prioritize mental wellbeing initiatives, ensuring adequate resources are allocated towards prevention, treatment, and awareness programs. Such an approach will foster a more resilient and productive workforce, reduce the burden on healthcare systems, and create more inclusive and supportive communities, all of which are essential for achieving sustainable development and enhancing global well-being.

- Establish a global fund specifically for youth-driven mental wellbeing projects, fostering innovation and accessibility in mental wellbeing services.
- Mobilize a consortium of educational institutions to integrate mental wellbeing education, emphasizing youth participation and leadership in these initiatives.
- Develop an international youth-led campaign to advocate for workplace mental wellbeing policies, emphasizing the importance of mental well-being in professional environments.
- Implement community-based mental wellbeing services in partnership with local youth organizations, focusing on accessibility and local relevance.

## **Chapter II. International peace and security**

International Peace and Security, in the context of mental well-being, underscores the profound interconnection between global peace and the mental wellbeing of populations. Mental well-being is both a prerequisite and a consequence of a peaceful society. Conflicts and insecurity often lead to widespread mental wellbeing issues, including trauma, anxiety, and depression, while poor mental wellbeing can exacerbate tensions and hinder conflict resolution efforts. Therefore, strategies to promote international peace and security must include comprehensive mental wellbeing support and interventions. This includes providing mental wellbeing care in conflict zones, integrating psychological support in peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, and promoting mental well-being as a part of post-conflict reconstruction efforts. By addressing the mental wellbeing needs of populations affected by conflict and fostering a culture of mental resilience, we can build stronger foundations for lasting peace and security. Such an approach not only aids in immediate psychological relief but also contributes to the long-term stability and cohesion of societies, essential for preventing the recurrence of conflict and for building a more peaceful and secure world.

- Launch youth-led peace-building initiatives in conflict-affected areas, integrating mental wellbeing support and trauma-informed care.
- Include youth representatives in leadership roles for UN missions, emphasizing mental wellbeing in peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts.
- Establish a network of young researchers to study the mental wellbeing impacts of conflict, informing global strategies for post-conflict mental wellbeing care.
- Train youth in conflict resolution and mental wellbeing first aid, empowering them as agents of change in their communities.

## **Chapter III. Science, technology, and innovation, and digital cooperation**

Focusing on Science, Technology, Innovation, and Digital Cooperation, plays a critical role in enhancing mental well-being, especially when considering the impact of socioeconomic status and access disparities. The advent of digital technologies has revolutionized mental wellbeing care with teletherapy, mobile health apps, online support platforms, and AI-driven tools, offering new avenues for accessing mental wellbeing resources. However, this technological advancement also brings to light the challenge of disproportionate access.

Individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds often face significant barriers, such as limited internet connectivity, lack of digital literacy, or the unaffordability of necessary devices, hindering their access to these innovative mental wellbeing solutions. This digital divide can deepen existing inequalities in mental wellbeing care, leaving the most vulnerable with fewer support options. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that the development and implementation of digital mental wellbeing strategies are inclusive, taking into account the diverse needs of different communities and making technologies accessible and affordable for all. Balancing technological interventions with traditional mental wellbeing services is essential to provide comprehensive care that spans across various socio-economic segments of society. Furthermore, responsible innovation and digital cooperation must prioritize mental wellbeing, ensuring that technological advancements contribute positively to mental well-being and do not exacerbate existing mental wellbeing issues.

- Develop innovation labs led by youth to create mental wellbeing technology solutions, ensuring these innovations are accessible across socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Promote youth involvement in local tele-mental wellbeing services, addressing the digital divide and making mental wellbeing resources more accessible.
- Fund research led by young scientists on the impact of digital technology on mental wellbeing, fostering a new generation of tech-savvy mental wellbeing advocates.

#### **Chapter IV. Youth and future generations**

It is important to highlight the critical importance of addressing mental well-being among young people, who are the torchbearers of our future. The mental wellbeing of youth is a growing concern, with increasing incidences of depression, anxiety, and other mental wellbeing disorders among this demographic. This trend is influenced by a variety of factors, including societal pressures, educational stress, unemployment, and the pervasive impact of social media. It's essential to prioritize the mental wellbeing of youth in our policies and initiatives, recognizing that their well-being is integral to the overall health and future prosperity of society. Initiatives aimed at supporting youth mental well-being should include accessible mental wellbeing services, educational programs that incorporate mental well-being, and the promotion of healthy lifestyles. By investing in the mental well-being of youth, we lay the foundation for a healthier, more resilient future generation.

- Launch global initiatives for youth mental wellbeing ambassadors and form youth-led mental wellbeing clubs in educational settings. Establish networks for regional collaboration in mental wellbeing advocacy, ensuring youth are integral in developing and leading these programs.
- Implement youth-designed mental wellbeing programs in schools and communities, and organize training sessions and workshops to enhance youth leadership and advocacy skills in mental wellbeing.
- Actively involve youth in the development and implementation of mental wellbeing policies in educational institutions and engage them in global policy dialogues to address youth-specific mental wellbeing challenges. Secure funding and support for youth leader representation at these international platforms.
- Create an international grant program for youth-led mental wellbeing initiatives and set up mentorship programs with young professionals as mentors, offering opportunities for mental wellbeing-focused internships and volunteer work.

#### **Chapter V. Transforming Global Governance**

Focusing on Transforming Global Governance emphasizes the pivotal role of reformed and responsive global governance structures in addressing mental well-being on a worldwide scale. The current global governance framework must evolve to recognize and integrate mental wellbeing as a critical component of public health and human rights agendas. This transformation involves advocating for mental wellbeing issues to be given a higher priority in international policy dialogues, ensuring adequate funding, and promoting global cooperation for mental wellbeing research and resource sharing. Moreover, it's crucial to establish international standards and guidelines for mental wellbeing care that are adaptable to various cultural and socio-economic contexts. This chapter highlights the need for a more inclusive approach in global governance, one that involves a wide range of stakeholders, including mental wellbeing professionals, policymakers, community leaders, and those with lived experiences of mental wellbeing issues. By transforming global governance to be more attuned to mental well-being, we can create a framework that not only responds effectively to the current mental wellbeing

crisis but also proactively fosters an environment conducive to mental resilience and well-being at a global scale. This will ensure that mental wellbeing considerations become an integral part of the decision-making process in all aspects of global governance, leading to more holistic and sustainable solutions for future generations.

- Advocate for mental well-being to be a standing agenda item at major international forums such as the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), Conference of the Parties (COP), General Assembly (GA), and the Science, Technology, and Innovation Forum (STI Forum). This ensures consistent global attention and action on mental wellbeing issues.
- Increased national and state-level funding dedicated to mental wellbeing initiatives, ensuring sustainable financial support for mental well-being programs and research.
- Advocate for the formulation and implementation of comprehensive mental wellbeing laws at member state levels, encompassing all aspects of mental well-being and ensuring adherence to international mental wellbeing standards.
- Emphasize the inclusion of mental well-being policies and programs for underrepresented and marginalized groups, including LGBTQI+ individuals, people with disabilities, and other minority communities, ensuring equitable mental wellbeing care access.
- Encourage the development of robust data infrastructure for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of mental wellbeing data. This will inform policy-making, identify service gaps, and track progress in mental well-being initiatives.
- Promote the recognition of mental wellbeing as a fundamental human right in international human rights frameworks, advocating for global standards in mental wellbeing care and protection.
- Work towards establishing legal frameworks that specifically protect the mental well-being of individuals, including workplace mental wellbeing policies and anti-discrimination laws that address mental wellbeing stigma.
- Push for the integration of mental wellbeing into primary health care systems globally, ensuring that mental wellbeing is not siloed but is a part of the overall health care agenda.
- Support the establishment of a Global Envoy or Special Representative for mental wellbeing at the United Nations level, tasked with championing mental wellbeing issues, facilitating international collaboration, and raising global awareness.