Mental disorders were famously not included in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and were not included in the WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable diseases. This is likely to change with the Sustainable Development Declaration by the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

In this presentation the arguments for inclusion of mental health in the sustainable development agenda, and efforts that have been made to strengthen the commitment to mental health in the SDGs, will be outlined.

There will be a particular focus on the growing commitment to population mental health expressed by key Asia Pacific organisations. Mental health is increasingly recognised as essential for effective action on NCD control, implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and protection of human rights. It is now also now an essential component of the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, and a contributor to sustained social and economic development.

Harry Minas has contributed to the development of research, teaching and service development in transcultural mental health and to the field of global mental health. He is Chair of the Executive of Mental Health in Multicultural Australia and has served on numerous state, national and international boards and committees. He has been a consultant to the Commonwealth and State Departments of Health, the International Organization for Migration, the World Health Organization, and ASEAN. He is an adviser to Ministries of Health and Social Affairs in several countries in Asia. He is a member of the Steering Committee of FundaMentalSDG which has been advocating for strengthening of mental health in the SDGs.