In Honor of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2016
10th Anniversary of the Adoption of
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
"Mental Well-Being is Fundamental to the Success of the SDGs"

2 December 2016
3.00 to 6.00 p.m. (Conference Room 4)
United Nations Headquarters, New York

Background:

The World Health Organization estimates that one in four people will experience a mental health condition in their lifetime. There has been growing recognition that neurological health and mental wellness, or lack thereof, is both a cause of and solution to global issues like violence, poverty and overall health. A tremendous amount of visionary thinking, scientific research, programmatic effort, governmental leadership, and public readiness has led us to where we are today. Now there is a need to focus on concrete solutions and steps to integrating a mental health perspective into the work of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In order to build lasting solutions, we must understand the depth and breadth of the problem. In August of this year, The World Bank Group and World Economic Forum stated that mental disorders account for 30% of the non-fatal disease burden worldwide and 10% of the global disease burden, estimating a cost of approximately $2.5 trillion in 2010 and expected to rise to $6 trillion by 2030.

Never before have we lived in a time where the ramifications of our daily decisions and actions affect so many, so fast. The pace at which the world is advancing, in ways that both help and harm us, is staggering. The interconnections are profound. They hold the key to unlocking the exponential change that could turn the tide in our favor. The vision of the 17 SDGs is aimed at transforming our world into a place where our children are safe at night, a depressed brother doesn't commit suicide, and where people have jobs that allow them and their families to thrive.

By directing attention and resources to mental health and purposefully weaving it into our plans to reach the SDGs, we will be able to address mental health crises and prevention at the individual, community and country levels. At the same time, we can also begin to meet these very ambitious and necessary global goals for our world.

Objectives:

This event aims to establish an understanding of how mental well-being affects poverty, health and peace on individual, community and societal levels. It will also touch on the value of integrating mental health care into programs, policies and funding for SDGs. The event will honor the various perspectives in the field while inspiring a united vision of a person's right to dignity and right to care. The event will bring forward those marginalized by psychosocial disability and those who have worked beside them to share their own unique experiences and insights on the intersection between mental health and poverty, health, and peace.

The Program:

This event honors the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, December 3rd. It seeks to increase support for people living with psychosocial disabilities by focusing on their needs in the context of the SDGs: #1 Poverty, #3 Health and #16 Peace. The program will be broken into blocks organized around these goals. Speakers and attendees will be cross-regional. Self-advocates, those personally affected by psychosocial disabilities, will be core to the program as both speakers and participants. Others will include subject matter experts, program service providers, financiers and high-level influencers.

Contact:

Zoë Adams, Executive Director, Strongheart Group
zoeadams@strongheartgroup.org; +1.512.293.7970

Strongheart Group is a non-profit, non-affiliated organization that focuses on affecting systems change at global and national levels. Current project issues include child marriage and mental health. Project issues in development are on epidemics and global health care strengthening. Future project issues under consideration include modern day slavery, foster care, homelessness and land rights.