

## CONCEPT NOTE

### Side Event during the Commission for Social Development 2018 (CSocD56)

Given the Priority Theme on:

“Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all”

**TITLE:** Achieving Poverty Eradication by Sustainable Health, Well-being and Education: The Case of Ebola in West Africa and other Epidemics and Disasters Worldwide

**DATE:** Tuesday, 30 January 2018

**VENUE:** UNHQ, Conference Room 7

**TIME:** 1:15PM-2:30PM

**Mission Sponsor:** Mission of Sierra Leone to the United Nations

**Co-Sponsors:** Other Missions (Invited); United African Congress; International Association of Applied Psychology; Psychology Coalition of NGOs accredited at the United Nations

**OVERALL PURPOSE:** This side event focuses on the urgency of awareness and attention to long-term recovery and resilience of communities suffering the after effects of health epidemics that have plagued countries and regions worldwide. The importance of this is highlighted in efforts to achieve the sustainable development goals, namely, SDG3 of Health and Well-being for All, including specifically target 3.4 which relates to “promoting mental health and well-being” as well as SDG4 - “Education for All,” in the context of these being relevant to the “road out of poverty.” The panel serves as an example of SDG 17, given that it represents various sectors. The deliverable is to call for policies and programmes that address sustainable long-term care and capacity building in health crises, as well as a multi-stakeholder partnership to implement interventions.

**SUMMARY:** The case of Ebola in the West African states (Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea) is presented as a powerful centerpiece and example of the dire need for continued attention in the international community about the ongoing medical and psychosocial services required by the population ravaged by the tragic virus. Fortunately, the spread of the Ebola virus in particular, is now under control. However, vast numbers of survivors are still suffering from lack of employment, physical symptoms and psychological distress, and communities are fractured from the extensive losses. There is still a desperate need for infrastructure in the health care system and for capacity building. Also, experts have noted a threat of spread of HIV/AIDS as a result of the EVD, which need to be addressed urgently. Attention is needed considering that the news cycle is passed and other disasters have taken center stage. The topic is presented in a larger context, to generalize to other cultures and diseases, to appeal to the global community about commonalities of needs in cases of infectious diseases as well as in natural disasters that have also tragically devastated many regions of the world. Recent natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, fires) have devastated nations around the world. Research has documented the long-term effects of these crises and suggested similarities to sequelae of infectious diseases.

Countries that have experienced outbreaks of these epidemics will be invited to share their experiences and best practices.