

# Measurement of Mental Health Among Adolescents at the Population Level (MMAAP)

## An overview

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for every child

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## Purpose

The field of mental health measurement has a long history of screening and diagnosing symptoms using a variety of validated tools in clinical and school settings. However, there is a gap of validated tools suitable for measurement of adolescent mental health conditions at the population level. Available data on mental disorders is representative of a only a small portion of the young population globally. UNICEF, with the support of experts, is working towards filling this gap in available tools and resulting lack of data through a methodological approach to measuring mental ill-health among adolescents age 10-19. Specifically, the MMAAP suite of tools and standard procedures will guide adaptation and use of suitable tools and measures to enable collection of robust, standardized data at the population level for anxiety and depression, functional impairment due to mental health conditions, suicide ideation and attempt and psychosocial support.

## MMAAP Methodological Approach

### Overview

The proposed approach to measure adolescents' mental health at the population level (MMAAP) is based on rigorous methodologies to adapt and validate tools capturing the following domains:

- 1 Adolescent anxiety and depression scale (AD):** This component would utilize brief validated scales or measures that capture adolescent anxiety and depressive symptoms.
- 2 Functional impairment (FX):** This section would ascertain if mental health problems result in limitations for the adolescent in carrying out activities or maintaining relationships at home, at school or work, or with peers.
- 3 Suicide ideation and attempt (SU):** These items capture suicide attempt in the past 12 months and current ideation. Administration of this module is seen an opportunity to provide a suitable pathway to referral for adolescents at risk.
- 4 Psychosocial Support:** Items are in development to measure mental health careseeking, psychosocial support and parental connection.

## Key steps in development of MMAP methodology

- A desk review of peer-reviewed studies of prevalence of adolescent mental health conditions was conducted during 2017.
- Based on the desk review, which also included an assessment of the current level of evidence, and a survey of commonly used instruments, a conceptual framework was constructed to guide development.
- Expert consultations have been held, beginning with a first Technical Experts Group meeting in March 2018, followed by creation of a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to provide guidance throughout the process.
- A set of existing instruments was selected to form the basis of the modules and questions were refined in conjunction with development of indicators.
- To better understand the questions and how they are interpreted, a cross-cultural adaptation process started in June 2019. Formative qualitative field work was initiated in June 2019 in Belize. The cross-cultural adaptation process included consultations with local adolescent mental health experts, followed by focus groups discussions and cognitive interviews with adolescents and parents.

## Components of MMAP package

The Measurement of Mental Health Among Adolescents at the Population Level (MMAP) package will consist of a set of tools and reference documents to guide adaptation and validation of tools, survey implementation, data analysis and dissemination.

- Recommended approaches for adolescents ages 10-14 and ages 15-19
- Guidance for survey implementers
- Interviewers' manual insert and supervisors' manual insert
- Training materials (guide for trainers and accompanying PowerPoint presentation)
- Data processing tools, including computer assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) and manual and data editing guidelines
- Tabulation plan with sample background text for tables; statistical software syntax file for analyses
- Template for dissemination brochure

## Planned future innovations

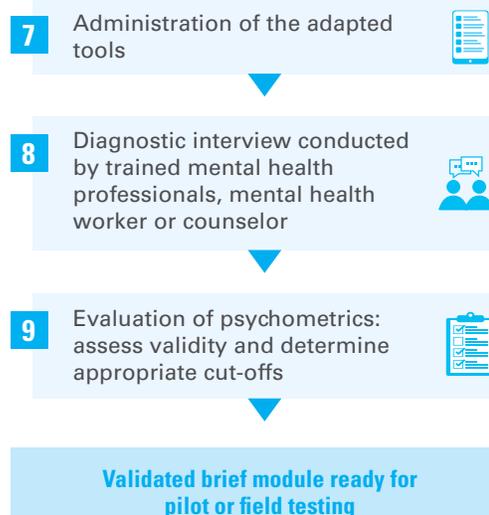
- As data become available, further analysis will provide insight into the prevalence and burden of adolescent mental health conditions and functional impairment, risk factors, and protective factors
- Development of additional tools to translate country data into actionable insight for policy makers and program managers

## Steps in adaptation and validation phases

### TRANS-CULTURAL TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION PROCESS



### VALIDATION (DATA COLLECTION)



For more information, visit:

<https://data.unicef.org/topic/adolescents/mental-health/>  
Email: [data@unicef.org](mailto:data@unicef.org)



**mmap**

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