



10 October 2022 – Today’s pre-Regional Committee technical meetings included the launch of the British Medical Journal’s (BMJ) “Global Health Special Issue on Health for Peace”. Building on the work of the [Global Health for Peace Initiative](#) (GHPI), the issue documents experiences from across WHO regions in order to better understand the complex nexus between health and peacebuilding.

The WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, which has a long history of working in challenging settings, began highlighting the linkages between health and peace in 2019, in partnership with the Ministry of Health of the Sultanate of Oman and the Government of Switzerland. The Health for Peace Initiative (HOPE) subsequently expanded to become the GHPI which includes all WHO regions.

GHPI has consistently focused on advocacy and sensitization, building capacities and fostering partnerships to support the development of programmes and interventions at country level. It also aims to increase evidence generation through research and analysis on health for peace globally.

Work promoting health and well-being in conflict-affected, fragile and vulnerable settings – from negotiating access to vulnerable populations, ensuring provision of essential services in crises, creating dialogue for joint planning and action, and strengthening health systems – has been ongoing for decades.

Documenting experiences

To better understand the challenges and opportunities, and learn from previous experiences to better guide future action, documentation is essential.

The Special Issue shares experiences from countries affected by conflict, fragility and insecurity from Syria to Myanmar, and includes countries in the Americas and Africa.

One aim of GHPI is to lend momentum to the shift from working in response to emergencies to working for peace, thus facilitating attainment of the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Vision 2023 – Health for All by All, and the WHO 13th General Programme of Work. All three highlight the importance of acting on the linkages between health and peace to ensure health and well-being are achieved by everyone, leaving no one behind. Generating evidence such as that presented in this Special Issue brings us closer to these goals.

Peace is an essential determinant of health. Its absence risks the reversal of successes that have already been achieved. We must learn how to maximize our impact in challenging settings to ensure our actions to improve health and well-being contribute to peace by building and strengthening resilience and improving social cohesion under the principles of equity and inclusiveness, community engagement and local ownership and leadership.

This special issue is an important contribution as we work towards a more just world, with health and peace for all.

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Editorials, commentaries and articles in the BMJ Special Issue can be found at https://gh.bmj.com/content/7/Suppl_8

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