ASET Colloquium

Mental Health in India: The Pathway to Zero

by Dr Nachiket Mor (Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health)

Dr. Nachiket Mor is an Indian economist and researcher with impactful work in financial inclusion and mental health systems. Hailing from a farming family in Yavatmal, Maharashtra, he holds a bachelor's in Physics from Mumbai University, an MBA from IIM Ahmedabad, and a PhD in Economics from University of Pennsylvania, specializing in Finance at the Wharton School. Over two decades at ICICI Bank, he pioneered rural financial solutions and later led the ICICI Foundation for Inclusive Growth. He was a Board Member of the RBI from 2013 to 2018. He was a member of the Planning Commission's High-Level Expert Group on Universal Health Care, the Primary Care Task Force of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the Health Commission for the State of Himachal Pradesh, and the Task Force on Global Health at the Academy of Medicine in Washington DC. Currently, as a Visiting Scientist at the Banyan Academy of Leadership in Mental Health and a Visiting Professor at the Indian School of Business in Health Systems Design, Dr. Mor's recent research focuses on innovative mental health system designs, emphasizing community-based care, digital interventions, and equitable access to mental health services, significantly shaping India's mental health landscape.

Mental Health in India: A Population-Level Pathway to Zero

197 MILLION affected by MENTAL ILLNESSES

Limited impact of recovery-focused approaches

SIMULATED IMPACT

2040
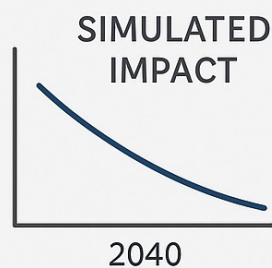
STRATEGY FRAMEWORK →

- Resilience
- Reduce
- Recognise
- Recovery

80% of DALY reduction from preventive interventions

UPSTREAM, DATA-DRIVEN, AND SUSTAINABLE POLICY

India carries one of the heaviest global burdens of mental illness, with close to 200 million affected and a treatment gap exceeding 80%. Current policy responses rely heavily on downstream, clinician-led recovery models—an approach that is both fiscally and logistically unsustainable. This talk presents a population-level strategy, grounded in systems epidemiology, economic modelling, and implementation science, to reduce India's mental health DALY burden to near zero by 2040. We simulate the impact of 30+ empirically validated interventions—ranging from early childhood programs to structural reforms—mapped across a four-part strategic framework: Resilience, Reduce, Recognise, and Recovery. Our model reveals that up to 80% of potential DALY reduction is achievable through upstream interventions targeting social determinants and early recognition. The analysis concludes with institutional and investment recommendations to reorient India's mental health system toward scalable, preventive, and data-driven care, leveraging scientific evidence to inform sustainable national policy.

Friday, 27 June 2025 at 4 p.m.
Lecture Theatre AG66, TIFR
YouTube Live:
https://youtu.be/_tz8x_CGPc8

We are on social media!

Facebook.com/aset.tifr

youTube.com/ASETForum

@aset_tifr

tifr.res.in/~aset

aset@tifr.res.in

tifr