On 16 July 2021, ILAE and IBE hosted a virtual roundtable discussion with over 160 participants from 50 countries including representatives from Ministries of Health, Education and Employment to Inspire a Decade of Action guided by the Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders. Highlights and additional information are available below. Full recording of the Roundtable, including the interventions by representatives from the Ministries of Health/Missions of Lesotho, Russia and Uruguay can be accessed at https://youtu.be/6hcD9jpMu08

Past, Present, Future – Action to Address Epilepsy

Road to the Resolution and Action Plan
Prof Alla Guekht, ILAE Vice President
Prof Guekht gave a presentation on the progress and major milestones since the launch of the Global Campaign in 1997. Watch her presentation and learn more about the 2020 Resolution and the Out of Shadows campaign.

Draft Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders
Dr Tarun Dua, Head Brain Health Unit, WHO
Dr Dua provided an overview of the draft Global Action Plan and the process from now to the Executive Board in early 2022 and the World Health Assembly in May 2022. She invited contributions as part of the consultation ending 5 August. Watch her presentation. Access the draft plan and WHO’s consultation portal.

Hopes for the Coming Decade
Francesca Sofia, IBE President-elect
Francesca gave a heartfelt call for action as she expressed her hopes and the urgent need for improved access to treatment, more investment in research and stronger approaches to address stigma and discrimination. Watch her presentation To learn more about why epilepsy is a public health imperative, read the 2019 WHO/ILAE/IBE report.

Strengthening Access to Services (Global Action Plan Objective 5.1)

Dr Li Shichuo
Founder, China Association Against Epilepsy
Dr Li Shichuo gave an overview of the 2000-2004 project to strengthen access to essential anti-seizure medicines for over 3 million people living in rural China. The project resulted in many millions of people living seizure free. 358 specialist epilepsy centres have now been developed and the project extended to the whole country. Listen to his presentation and read the full project report.

Dr Symon Kariuki
National Epilepsy Coordination Committee, Ministry of Health, Kenya
Dr Kariuki provided a detailed presentation on the importance of national coordination and collaboration to ensure intersectoral action on epilepsy and to provide effective and empowering means for people with epilepsy and their family to engage in designing care pathways. Listen to his presentation and visit the NECC website.
Support and Engagement of People with Epilepsy (Global Action Plan Objective 5.2)

Valentina Khan took us on an enlightening journey through the childhood hurdles she had to overcome living with epilepsy and onto her remarkable achievements today. Learn more about the importance of neurophysiology and Watch her inspiring presentation.

To learn more about IBE and the IBE Golden Light Awards.

President of the Philippines League Against Epilepsy (PLAE), Dr Jean Marie Ahorro, provided many examples of how PLAE is reaching out to address stigma and improve care, even during the pandemic. Watch her presentation and visit the PLAE website.

Epilepsy as an Entry Point for Strengthened Care and Treatment for Other Neurological Disorders (Global Action Plan Objective 5.3)

Dr Zarine Mogal, specialist neurologist from Pakistan, showed what can be achieved through taking a combined community and primary health care approach to strengthening care for epilepsy. She explained how this model can benefit other neurological and synergistic chronic conditions. Watch her presentation and visit the Pakistan National Epilepsy Centre website.

Dr Silvio Basic, State Secretary, Ministry of Health, Croatia outlined the importance of the Global Action Plan for promoting epilepsy treatment. He also highlighted the opportunities it presents to strengthening services for all neurological disorders. Watch his presentation.

Children and Adolescents

The prevalence of different neurological disorders changes across the life course. Dr Jo Wilmshurst, President of ICNA, provided a comprehensive and excellent presentation on the specialized needs of children and adolescents with epilepsy and other neurological disorders including during their transition to adulthood, emphasizing the importance of reflecting these needs appropriately in the Action Plan. See her presentation.

Epilepsy During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Prof Helen Cross, ILAE President-elect, provided a summary on the outcomes of the work of the ILAE/IBE Task Force on COVID-19, including a position statement in multiple languages on COVID vaccines and epilepsy and a survey of the physical and psychosocial impact of the pandemic on people with epilepsy. Watch her presentation. Learn more in the ILAE 2020 Annual Report and ILAE COVID webpage.