

#StigmaFree

Our 2025

Impact Report



De-Mentes



Foreword

2025 has been a truly remarkable year for De-Mentes. Looking back, we are proud of the impact we have collectively achieved.

This report highlights some of the most important milestones of our year: we brought our initiatives to Peru's coastal, highland, and Amazon regions; we strengthened strategic partnerships with key actors at both national and international levels; and we supported diverse organizations in building safe, stigma-free spaces for mental health.

In 2026, we will celebrate ten years as an organization. This milestone renews our commitment to driving systemic change so that mental health is recognized as a right, not a privilege, in Peru, in Latin America, and around the world.



Thank you for being part of this journey!

Lucero Andaluz Llerena

Cofounder & Executive Director



Introduction

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About De-Mentes

De-Mentes was born from the coming together of its co-founders' **lived experiences**, stories that had long gone unacknowledged and not fully processed, and that found in that dialogue a space to speak more openly about mental health.

In this context, **De-Mentes was founded in 2016 as a youth-led, women-led nonprofit organization** that sought to create spaces for more people to talk about mental health. Over time, its mission and scope have expanded.

Today, we are an organization dedicated to mental health promotion and prevention in Peru and Latin America, from a comprehensive, community-based, and #StigmaFree approach.

Our impact focuses on driving change at both the community and systemic levels, transforming knowledge, attitudes, and practices; fostering conversations that previously did not take place; strengthening support networks; and creating new opportunities for social participation.

Our purpose

To build #StigmaFree communities towards mental health, in Peru and across the world.

Our vision

Inclusive, empathetic, and resilient communities that position mental health as a priority in Peru and across Latin America.

About this report

This report presents an overview of the work carried out by De-Mentes in 2025, highlighting the key initiatives that defined our year.

Our results are organized around the three strategic areas that guided our work in 2025: youth and communities; communication and advocacy; and mental health at work, reflecting the comprehensive approach through which we seek to generate impact.

Furthermore, this report brings together key reflections on the state of mental health at both the national and international levels, as well as the role we have taken on as an organization to help position mental health on the public agenda and drive meaningful change.

Finally, we present our our forward-looking priorities, reaffirming our commitment to promoting mental health as a fundamental right.





Youth and communities

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"A-Gente de Cambio": promoting mental health among adolescents

We worked alongside the Pacific Alliance, the National Youth Secretariat, and the National Comprehensive Program for Family Welfare (INABIF) to implement this project during the second half of the year. Its objective was to strengthen regional integration between Peru, Chile, Mexico, and Colombia through a **youth volunteer initiative focused on promoting mental health among adolescents** in vulnerable situations in Peru.



The project involved both in-person and virtual implementation of participatory training and awareness-raising spaces aimed at strengthening socio-emotional skills among key stakeholders and promoting adolescent mental health from a community- and youth-centered approach. It brought together young volunteers from Peru, Chile, Mexico, and Colombia, as well as adolescents, caregivers, and INABIF technical teams across the regions of Amazonas, Áncash, Cajamarca, Lima, Ayacucho, and Tacna, in Peru. Altogether, we impacted over 430 people, both directly and indirectly. As part of the project, we achieved the following results.



Among youth volunteers, there was an **average increase of 17%** in knowledge related to mental health and project management.

*I am very satisfied and grateful for the support provided by De-Mentes throughout the entire process. I would definitely recommend the program and will carry the knowledge gained from this experience with me.**

*Quote from a volunteer participant in the project.



Among participating adolescents:

- 59% reported a high level of openness and willingness to care for their mental health and helpseeking at the end of the intervention.
- This willingness **increased by 11%** between the pre- and post-intervention assessments.

Finally, among INABIF technical teams participating across Peru:

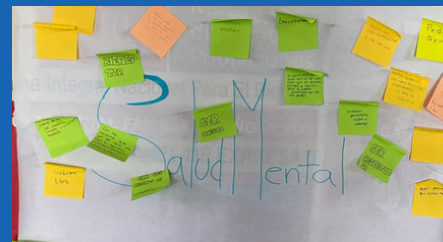
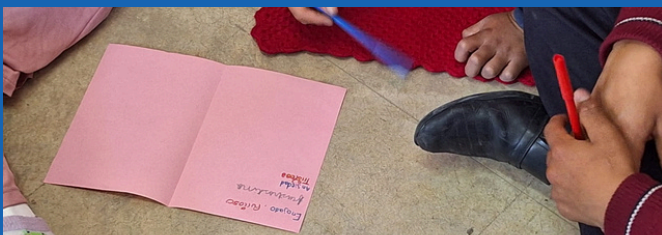
- 80% reached a high level of knowledge in psychological first aid and psychosocial support by the end of the intervention.
- A **42% increase in these areas** was observed, demonstrating a significant improvement in these key capacities as a result of the project.

*I learned to understand myself and why I feel the way I do.**

*Quote from an adolescent participant in the project.

*Adolescents were able to express themselves freely with other young people in a space of trust.***

**Quote from an INABIF technical team member.





Strengthening capabilities to promote adolescent mental health in southern Peru's highlands

We partnered with the EMpower Foundation to implement a capacity-building process aimed at local organizations working with communities in Arequipa and Cusco, as part of an initiative led by this foundation to promote adolescent mental health in these regions.

This work combined collective learning spaces with tailored technical assistance, with the goal of integrating mental health as a cross-cutting component in the interventions of participating organizations, through a

community-based, intercultural, and stigma-free approach.

As part of this project, we implemented a structured learning process focused on key topics such as mental health and stigma, the state of mental health in Peru, the role of the family, community-based strategies, psychological first aid, impact measurement, and advocacy. These spaces fostered the exchange of experiences and strengthened comprehensive approaches among participating organizations.



Additionally, we provided personalized technical assistance to four local organizations, based on an assessment of their institutional capacities. This process supported the development of theories of change for mental health interventions and the definition of concrete action plans, incorporating tools for suicide prevention and postvention from a community-based and intercultural perspective.



Overall, this intervention contributed to strengthening technical capacities and consolidating the role of local organizations as key actors in promoting adolescent mental health within their communities.

*I think it is very important to have these spaces where learning is generated, so that we can strengthen our interventions for promoting mental health in a comprehensive way for everyone.**

***Quote from a leader of a participant organization.*

“Refuerza Emocional”: youth mental health promotion

In partnership with the Ministry of Education and the National Youth Secretariat, we joined the rollout of the national strategy “Refuerza Emocional,” aimed at strengthening the mental health and emotional well-being of young people in Peru by providing access to practical tools and care resources.

In this context, De-Mentes led workshops on mental health, stigma, and emotion regulation, delivered in both in-person and virtual formats, with the participation of hundreds of young people nationwide.



These spaces fostered reflection, learning, and the development of skills to promote mental health in everyday life. In addition, the workshops were very well received by participants, who highlighted their practical and relatable nature.



This strategic partnership represented an important step in aligning efforts between civil society and the public sector, and allowed us to further expand our reach in promoting the mental health of adolescents and young people across the country.

*I am very grateful for what I have learned. My commitment is to use this knowledge to make an impact not only on the way I think, but also on changing this reality. Sharing what I have learned will definitely be very enriching.**

*Quote from a young participant in our workshops.

“Huertos que cuidan”: promoting mental health in urban agricultural communities

In partnership with ISA Energía, a regional energy company, we strengthened the socio-emotional skills of farmers participating in the “Huertos en Línea” (Connected Gardens) program, a community initiative with over 20 years of track record that promotes urban agriculture and local development among families in vulnerable situations in the district of Villa María del Triunfo, in Lima.

The intervention focused on providing practical tools for mental health care in everyday life, addressing topics such as mental health and unconscious biases, identification of warning signs, psychological first aid, as well as self-care and community care strategies. All of this was grounded in a community-based and relational approach that values social connections, a sense of belonging, and collective coping strategies.



Through this process, we strengthened the capacities of around 40 participants, promoting their mental health and resilience at both the individual and community levels. This work reaffirms the importance of integrating mental health into community development initiatives, recognizing its key role in improving quality of life.

Virtual Program on Emergency Preparedness and Response

In response to the impact of heavy rains and landslides across the country, we partnered with TECHO and PROA, civil society organizations that lead community-based and volunteer-driven initiatives, during the first quarter of the year to launch a national volunteer call aimed at strengthening emergency preparedness and response.

This program offered virtual training sessions led by specialists in emergency management and mental health. In this context, De-Mentes led the emotional well-being component in emergency contexts, strengthening capacities in psychological first aid, emotional support, and self-care in crisis situations.

This contribution aimed to ensure that emergency response efforts consider not only physical protection, but also the mental health and well-being of affected individuals and those providing support.



Communication and advocacy

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Positioning mental health on the United Nations global agenda

In 2025, we took a key step in our advocacy work by participating in high-level international spaces. In partnership with the Global Mental Health Action Network (GMHAN), our Executive Director represented De-Mentes and Peruvian civil society by taking the floor at the Multi-Stakeholder Hearing of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, held as part of the preparatory process for the Fourth High-Level Meeting on Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) and Mental Health.



Our participation also included active engagement in strategic meetings, events, and dialogue spaces with Permanent Missions to the United Nations from countries across Latin America and other regions. These spaces enabled us to position mental health as an essential component of health and sustainable development, contributing to a broader collective advocacy effort.



This experience not only reaffirmed De-Mentes' commitment to advocacy as a tool for transformation, but also opened new opportunities for collaboration with global stakeholders.

As a team, we strongly believe in the need to amplify the voices of young people and individuals with lived experience at all levels of decision-making, national, regional, and global.



Participation in the United Nations General Assembly Week in New York

Our Executive Director traveled once again to New York for the United Nations General Assembly Week in September, in the context of the Fourth High-Level Meeting on NCDs and Mental Health. She represented De-Mentes and GMHAN, bringing the voice of civil society into one of the world's most important decision-making forums. During the week, she participated as a speaker and panelist in various high-level events organized by key actors such as the World Health Organization (WHO), United for Global Mental Health, UNICEF, Wellcome Trust, and the Child Mind Institute, among others.



A highlight of our participation was the event “No Health Without Mental Health,” where we shared space with global leaders such as Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO, as well as heads of state, ministers of health, and leading figures in the field.

Our Executive Director also took part in the First Global Summit on Youth Mental Health, where, in a TED-style talk, she addressed the importance of tackling stigma based on her lived experience and advancing toward community-based models of mental health care.



She also participated as a panelist in the event “Taking Mental Health Beyond Institutions into the Community: Lessons from Uganda’s Multisectoral Success,” co-organized by StrongMinds and the Government of Uganda, where she highlighted the role and relevance of a community-based approach.

The High-Level Meeting on NCDs and Mental Health represented a historic opportunity for the mental health field. In this context, our participation contributed to reinforcing the importance of translating these commitments into public policies and sustainable investments, connecting global agendas with national and local realities and needs. This advocacy process culminated in the adoption, on December 15, 2025, of a political declaration by all United Nations Member States, establishing key commitments to advance the global agenda on mental health and NCDs.



“Te Escucho 5K”: the race for mental health promotion and suicide prevention

In October, we co-organized the “Te Escucho 5K” (I’m Here to Listen 5K) charity race alongside Descubriéndonos – Center for Psychotherapy, Mental Health, and Intervention, with the aim of raising awareness about the importance of talking about mental health and promoting suicide prevention in Peru. The initiative brought together more than 500 participants, including young people, families, and civil society, in a day that combined physical activity, awareness-raising, and community.



The event, held in the district of San Miguel in Lima, featured a 5K race, a solidarity walk, and informational spaces led by specialists and volunteers, where participants received guidance and free mental health resources. Under the slogan “here no one walks alone,” the event promoted empathy, active listening, and collective care as essential tools for well-being.



“Dear Evan Hansen” in Peru: Advancing mental health awareness

We partnered with the Cultural Association Preludio for the first-ever staging in Peru of “Dear Evan Hansen”, a globally acclaimed musical that addresses key issues such as adolescent mental health, anxiety, depression, and suicide. This collaboration allowed us to leverage the reach of arts and culture as platforms to raise awareness about the importance of openly discussing mental health and seeking help when needed.

As part of this initiative, we coordinated communication campaigns and awareness-raising spaces alongside the show’s cast, promoting messages aimed at reducing stigma and fostering open conversations about mental health across individual, peer, family, and school settings. These actions were carried out both in-person and through digital platforms, expanding the reach of the message to diverse audiences.



In addition, a special avant premiere performance was held in support of De-Mentes, bringing together hundreds of people committed to building a #StigmaFree Peru and reinforcing the role of the arts as a key ally in promoting mental health.



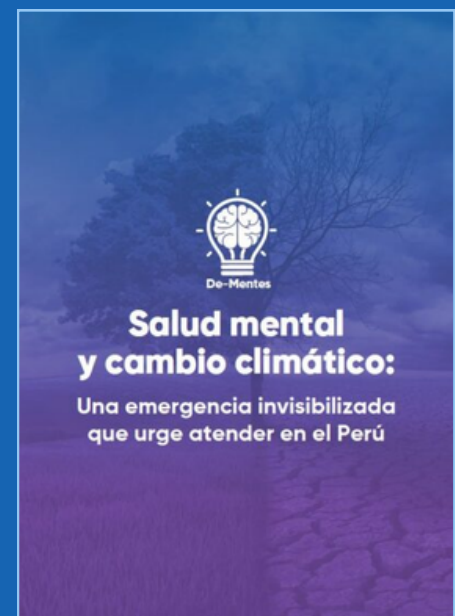
Research for advocacy: evidence to drive change

In 2025, we strengthened our research efforts as a key tool for mental health advocacy through the publication of two reports aimed at shedding light on critical issues and promoting informed decision-making in public policy.



In the first half of the year, we developed a report on the gaps in public financing for mental health in Peru, analyzing resource allocation and identifying structural constraints that affect the coverage, quality, and sustainability of services. This report sought to highlight the need to prioritize mental health within the public budget and to advance toward more sustainable investment aligned with the community-based reform.

In the second half of the year, we published a report on the intersection between mental health and climate change, addressing this issue as an under-recognized emergency in Peru. The analysis highlighted how the effects of climate change impact people's emotional well-being, particularly in vulnerable communities, and underscored the urgency of integrating mental health into crisis response and prevention.



Both efforts are part of our commitment to generating evidence as a foundation for mental health advocacy.



Strengthening communication and mental health capacities among key stakeholders

In partnership with the Department of Communications at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP) and Descubriéndonos – Center for Psychotherapy, Mental Health, and Intervention, we strengthened the capacities of journalists and communicators to responsibly address mental health and suicide in the media through the workshop “Changing the Narrative: Key Guidelines for Addressing Mental Health and Suicide in the Media.”

This space aimed to promote the role of the media as key agents in reducing stigma, promoting mental health, and preventing suicide, by providing practical tools and guidelines for ethical, informed, and sensitive coverage. More than 20 journalists and communicators from national and local media participated, including print and digital platforms, as well as representatives from civil society organizations.



Digital communication and advocacy: positioning mental health on the public agenda

Throughout 2025, we strengthened our communication and digital marketing strategy as a key pillar for awareness-raising and mental health advocacy. Through our social media channels, using Instagram as our primary platform, with LinkedIn and TikTok as complementary channels, we published nearly 200 pieces of content aimed at promoting mental health care, reducing stigma, and influencing mental health public policy. We closed the year with a digital community of approximately 40,000 followers across our platforms.



As part of our communication efforts, we implemented joint campaigns in collaboration with civil society organizations and international agencies. Notably, we contributed to the collective response to Bill No. 4324/2022-CR, which proposed amendments to the General Law on Persons with Disabilities, allowing for the creation of institutional care centers and permanent shelters. As part of a broader advocacy effort, we helped ensure that the Executive Branch did not approve and issued observations on the bill, deeming it incompatible with the national legal framework and Peru's international commitments. This initiative reaffirms our commitment to deinstitutionalization.

At De-Mentes, we firmly believe in the power of communication as a tool for social transformation. This work demonstrates its effectiveness not only in fostering awareness, but also in enabling articulation and collective action.



Mental health at work

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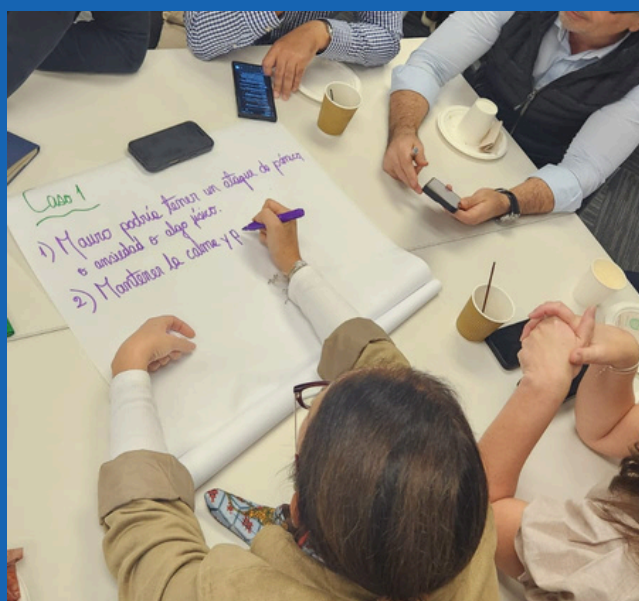




Building Safe and Stigma-Free Workplaces

In 2025, we supported a range of organizations and companies across sectors such as education, financial services, insurance, consumer goods, and real estate in building safer, stigma-free workplace environments around mental health.

As part of our initiatives, we conducted research processes to identify perceptions, needs, and key mental health indicators. To do so, we used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, complemented by communication advisory and awareness-raising initiatives, generating a solid foundation for the design of relevant and sustainable actions.



+1,700

Leaders and employees participated in our initiatives.



100%

Of workshop participants, reported an improvement in knowledge, attitudes, or practices related to mental health.



100 NPS

Likelihood to recommend our services *.



In addition, we delivered workshops and talks aimed at strengthening socio-emotional skills, promoting individual and collective care, and reducing stigma in the workplace. These spaces were designed using a participatory and horizontal methodology, fostering the exchange of experiences and the development of support networks among employees.

We also implemented tailored interactive and participatory activities that encouraged collective reflection and reinforced organizational commitment to mental health.



*Extensive knowledge of the subject and an ability to communicate it effectively.**

*The team combines professionalism with a close, approachable style.**

We will continue working to position mental health as a central component of workplace well-being, driving cultural change toward more empathetic and inclusive work environments.

*Quotes from partner organizations on our mental health at work initiatives.





Forward- looking priorities

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Looking ahead: priorities and next steps

As we look toward 2026, a year in which we will mark ten years as an organization, we reaffirm our commitment to driving systemic change so that mental health is recognized as a right, not a privilege, with a continued focus on promotion and prevention.

We aim to further strengthen our initiatives targeting vulnerable communities and youth across Peru's territories, consolidating community-based, sustainable, and culturally relevant interventions.

We also plan to expand our presence in regional advocacy spaces. Our Executive Director has been appointed as Regional Advisor to the Global Mental Health Action Network, which will enable us to coordinate efforts with key actors across the Latin American region. For instance, in light of upcoming electoral processes in countries such as Peru, Colombia, and Brazil in 2026, we will seek to advance advocacy efforts aimed at positioning mental health within political agendas.



Furthermore, we will work to strengthen our organization's financial sustainability by leveraging our recent designation by Peruvian tax authorities as a qualified recipient of charitable donations. We will also prioritize strengthening our institutional governance by integrating technical expertise and lived experience in mental health.

We will continue moving forward with the conviction that change is possible when it is built collectively.

Thank you



 dementes.org.pe

 info@dementes.org.pe

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