

Project Concept note:

Project title	Mental Health awareness comprehensive action plan GULU.
Organisation Name	MBS for mental Health and Wellbeing For BAME
Stake Holders:	Uganda Nurses and midwives' association UK, British Ugandan Doctors UK, Uganda House UK, MOH Uganda, Ugandan Community Liverpool, Ugandan community Manchester.
Date for project	3rd Nov–13th Nov
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Activities:	Kampala Gulu Run, Fundraising dinner, Inter-school foot ball and mental health 1st Aid training. <i>Theme: Comprehensive mental health care for all.</i>

MBS for mental health and wellbeing for BAME is a mental health charity founded by Diaspora doctors and nurses from Uganda living in UK. The charity is supported by the Uganda nurse's association UK, the British Ugandan doctors, UK Allied professionals and the Uganda Embassy.

Please allow us to introduce our mental health fundraising plan for Comprehensive mental health and wellbeing in Gulu from 3rd Nov 2024 to 13th. The plan is for diaspora Nurses, doctors and allied professions to work with local teams in Gulu to introduce Prevention and Health promotion evidence-based pathways in Northern Uganda. This program is to Include of vocational rehabilitation programmes for our Youth.

Efforts to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and promote mental well-being are essential in supporting the healing and recovery of individuals and communities affected by the legacy of conflict in Northern Uganda. MBS for mental health will be addressing the mental health needs of the population in Gulu by using a comprehensive approach that prioritize first aid training, trauma-informed care, community-based interventions, psychosocial support, and access to mental health services.

Gulu, located in Northern Uganda, has been significantly impacted by the long-lasting effects of the civil war that ravaged the region for over 20 years. The prolonged conflict, characterized by violence, displacement, and trauma, has had a profound impact on the mental health of the population in Gulu and the surrounding areas. As a result, Gulu has one of the highest rates of mental illness in Uganda, with many individuals experiencing a range of mental health challenges as a direct consequence of the conflict.

The civil war in Northern Uganda, led by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Ugandan government forces, resulted in widespread devastation, loss of life, and displacement of communities. The conflict was marked by atrocities, including abductions, killings, sexual violence, and forced conscription of children as soldiers. These traumatic experiences have left deep scars on the mental well-being of individuals in Gulu, leading to high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions.

ACTIVITIES:

Kampala – Gulu Mental health Run

Kampala the capital city of Uganda will be the starting point of the run to Gulu the finishing point which is 335km away. The run will take 7 days with 6 stopping points for health promotion led by our diaspora mental health clinical experts.

Mental health Fundraising Dinner:

This is prepared for health and cooperate stake holders to discuss a comprehensive approach to improving and supporting recovery of mental health and wellbeing in Gulu region. Out comes will allow diaspora nurses and doctors to support pathway developments, capacity building and compile sustainability community programmes.

Mental health awareness Inter-Schools Football Tournament:

MBS will invite secondary schools in Gulu region to join in a competitive football match to embrace the theme Physical Fitness for Mental Wellbeing, on the 10th of November 2024. This football tournament has been supported by Everton in the community charity. MBS intends to make this an annual football tournament comprised of mental health awareness psychoeducation for schools.

Mental Health 1st Aid training for schools and health centres – 11th and 12th of November:

Day 1 – Supported by Gulu university community engagement team, MBS experts will use the university's grounds to train secondary school teachers, lecturers, and health centre professions assessment skills for identifying signs and symptoms of mental illness including Sign posting.

Day 2 – Will be assessment and sign posting day for members of the public. Local stake holders have also been invited to this event.

Closure and evaluation of project will take place on 13th of November

Current issues:

1. **Trauma and PTSD:** Many individuals in Gulu have experienced severe trauma and witnessed horrific events during the conflict, leading to a high prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and related mental health issues.

2. **Displacement and Loss:** The forced displacement of communities, loss of homes, livelihoods, and loved ones have contributed to feelings of grief, loss, and psychological distress among the population in Gulu.

3. **Stigma and Social Isolation:** The stigma surrounding mental illness, coupled with social ostracization and discrimination, can prevent individuals in Gulu from seeking help and accessing mental health services, exacerbating their condition.

4. **Lack of Mental Health Services:** Limited access to mental health services, trained professionals, and resources in Gulu can hinder individuals from receiving timely and appropriate care for their mental health needs.

5. **Intergenerational Trauma:** The impact of the civil war on families and communities in Gulu has resulted in intergenerational trauma, where the effects of trauma and mental illness are passed down from one generation to the next.

Addressing the mental health needs of the population in Gulu requires comprehensive approaches that prioritize trauma-informed care, community-based interventions, psychosocial support, and access to mental health services. Efforts to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and promote mental well-being are essential in supporting the healing and recovery of individuals and communities affected by the legacy of conflict in Northern Uganda. Failure to address post war scars would increase severe mental health disorders, increase stigma and isolation leading to high mortality rate and increased suicide in Northern Uganda.

Compiled by:

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