

### The Problem:

Mental disorders contribute to 13% of the global burden of disease worldwide. Almost three quarters of this burden occurs in low- and middle-income countries where scarce resources and a shortage of trained professionals mean individuals living with mental disorders have limited access to evidence based treatments. Even in contexts where treatment is available, widespread stigmatization faced by those living with mental disorders means that they are often unwilling or unable to access this care.

### Mental Health Innovation Network:

Grand Challenges Canada supports the Mental Health Innovation Network. The Network aims to facilitate the development and uptake of effective mental health innovations by enabling learning, enhancing linkages, disseminating knowledge and leveraging resources: [mhinnovation.net](http://mhinnovation.net)

The Network's activities are supported by a team of researchers and policy makers from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine's Centre for Global Mental Health and the World Health Organization's Department for Mental Health and Substance Abuse.

### Partnerships:

We are seeking partners to bring resources and expertise to bear against this grand challenge in 2015.

Funded by the Government of Canada, Grand Challenges Canada is dedicated to supporting Bold Ideas with Big Impact in global health.

## Global Mental Health

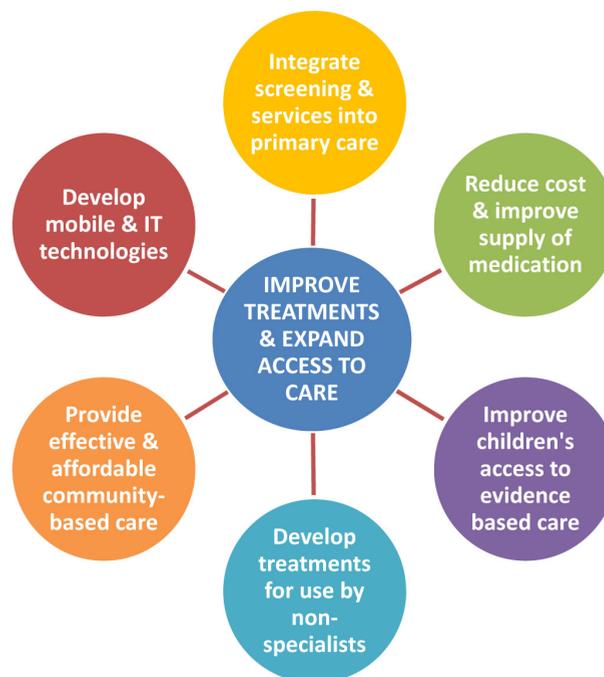


Grand Challenges Canada®  
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**BOLD IDEAS WITH BIG IMPACT®**

*There is a tremendous opportunity for innovative solutions to increase the number of people who have access to quality care and to ensure the greatest outcome for each person reached.*

We support bold ideas to **improve treatments and expand access to care for mental disorders** through transformational, affordable and cost-effective innovations which have the potential to be sustainable at scale. Our current portfolio includes innovations aimed at addressing the following challenges:



*For example:*

- A smart phone EEG to diagnose seizure disorders
- Screening for neurodevelopmental disorders during vaccine campaigns
- Addressing adolescent depression through community radio
- Using cultural therapy to counter youth violence
- A website for psychosocial support in emergencies
- User operated pharmacies
- Training spiritual leaders to be providers of community mental health care
- Mobile clinics to extend psychological first aid in post conflict settings
- Tackling severe mental illness in homeless adults through long-term care in shared living spaces.

*"There is no health without mental health"  
- World Health Organization*

**Total investments to date: \$32 million in 64 projects throughout Africa, Asia, and South and Latin America/Caribbean and the Mental Health Innovation Network.**

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In Haiti, Zanmi Lasante and partners are implementing a model to expand services for a range of mental health disorders including depression, epilepsy, psychosis/bipolar and child/adolescent disorders. Thanks to this intervention 5,320 people have been screened for depression using an adapted screening tool. 5,086 people are receiving treatment for a range of mental health disorders leading to an estimated 2,325 already experiencing improved health outcomes.



Researchers at the University of Ottawa are conducting clinical trials of a low-cost, portable electroencephalography (EEG) device in Bhutan. To date, 117 patients with suspected seizure disorders have received a smartphone EEG and neurocysticercosis serum test. This is the first time many of them have had access to such diagnostic techniques. Those with confirmed diagnoses are now receiving follow up testing and care.



In Zimbabwe, a trained health worker counsels a young mother on the Friendship Bench. To date, 2,960 people have been screened for depression, 740 have received psychiatric education, and 288 have received treatment through this innovative delivery system. The Friendship Bench's brief interventions are proving to be helpful for depressed and anxious patients, 59 of whom have already shown improved health outcomes in the pilot study.



## Grand Challenges Canada® Grands Défis Canada

**BOLD IDEAS WITH BIG IMPACT®**

Grand Challenges Canada supported mental health innovations are increasing access to care: over 45,000 people have accessed mental health services and/or treatments. In addition, Grand Challenges Canada has:

- increased the visibility of mental health globally and in local contexts, and
- catalysed a network of current and future mental health innovation leaders.

For more examples of our innovations, visit [mhinnovation.net](http://mhinnovation.net)



[grandchallenges.ca](http://grandchallenges.ca)