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GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH INNOVATIONS

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PROOF OF CONCEPT INNOVATIONS

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Blue Banyan Consulting

A Participatory Platform to Improve Mental Health Literacy and Self-Care for India's LGBTQIA++ Youth

Institution Country: India

Implementation Country: India

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Blue Banyan Consulting will build a youth-led mental health Youth Awareness, Literacy and Self-Care Intervention Program (YALSIP) to reduce self-stigma and improve the mental health literacy and self-care capability of LGBTQIA++ youth in India. Using participatory action research methods, LGBTQIA++ youth from two participating colleges will examine and discuss their mental health concerns in a safe space and collaborate with experts to design needs specific mental health literacy and self-care modules. YALSIP will be housed on a broader multilingual learning and engagement website featuring mental health information and resources, co-developed by LGBTQIA++ youth. The project will also collaborate with media partners and public figures to create a nuanced public narrative on LGBTQIA++ communities and their mental health needs, with the goal of breaking down myths and reducing stigma and discrimination.



Child's i Foundation

Youth Wellbeing Champions: piloting mental health peer support for young people in Uganda

Institution Country: United Kingdom

Implementation Country: Uganda

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

In Uganda, the lack of accessible community-based mental health services and high levels of social stigma prevent young people from being able to acknowledge and address their mental health needs. Youth in institutional care are particularly vulnerable given the high levels of neglect and abuse prevalent. Child's i Foundation will address the gap in integrated mental health and wellbeing support for youth and particularly young people with lived experience of care (YPLEC) by upskilling social workers and social work professionals to address the mental health needs of this population and creating a peer network of "well-being champions" to increase access to non-judgemental peer support.



Eurasian Union of Adolescents and Youth Teenergizer

#ShareWeCare

Institution Country: Georgia

Implementation Country: Kyrgyz Republic, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically increased the demand for mental health support among youth in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region (EECA); however, the availability of youth-friendly mental health services remains limited. The Eurasian Union of Adolescents and Youth Teenergizer (EUAYT) team is youth-led and includes professional psychologists and trained peer-consultants who provide free and confidential counseling on various topics, including sexual and reproductive health and living with HIV to young people from the EECA region through their web platform. This innovation will extend the existing Teenergizer online peer-counseling platform to provide youth-friendly mental health services to youth (15-24 years) in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.



Free Yezidi Foundation

Youth for HOPE

Institution Country: Iraq

Implementation Country: Iraq

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Free Yezidi Foundation (FYF) currently operates a tiered trauma treatment system in which women from the Yezidi community are trained as Harikara (Helpers) to provide basic trauma care and linkages to expert support through a referral pathway. FYF will adapt this model for Yezidi youth living in Khanke Internally Displaced Population (IDP) camp and surrounding towns by training a team of youth Harikara in providing Psychological First Aid and delivering mental health literacy and support through alternative therapeutic models such as psychodrama and art.



Green String Network

Kumekucha Quest: Trauma-informed peacebuilding

Institution Country: Kenya

Implementation Country: Kenya

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Youth in Kenya experience chronic stress as a result of high levels of poverty, unemployment, domestic violence, police harassment, and exposure to traumatic events such as violent crime, electoral violence, witnessing extra-judicial killings as well as terrorism. There are also high levels of fear and stigma in Kenya when talking about mental health. Green String Network will adapt its existing community-led social cohesion program, 'Kumekucha: It's A New Dawn' for youth 18-24 years in Nairobi and Kwale counties, Kenya. The program will use a peer-facilitated approach to increase understanding of trauma and mental health, teach practical skills for emotional regulations, and build resilience to daily stressors and challenges in youth who have experienced trauma.



Indian Law Society

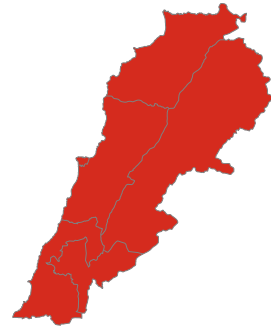
Enabling School Teachers as Gatekeepers for Preventing Adolescent Suicides

Institution Country: India

Implementation Country: India

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Suicide is the leading cause of death among older adolescents in India, which accounts for a third of suicides globally. The state of Chhattisgarh has the second-highest suicide rate in India with 24.7 suicide deaths per 100,000 population. Indian Law Society will design and evaluate an online modular gatekeeper training course for suicide prevention in consultation with young people. The gatekeeper course will train teachers in secondary schools across three districts of Chhattisgarh to identify, support, and refer at-risk adolescents to mental health services.



Lebanese American University

Yes to Emotions in Youth (YEY): An Emotional Intelligence Training for Vulnerable Youth in Lebanon

Institution Country: Lebanon

Implementation Country: Lebanon

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Yes to Emotions in Youth (YEY) is an evidence-based, youth-led, and culturally sensitive emotional intelligence training program that addresses psychopathology and helps prevent mental illness in youth. YEY aims to develop five emotional competencies (identifying, understanding, expressing, regulating, and using emotions) that are key to increasing youth's resilience, health, autonomy, intra- and interpersonal wellbeing, as well as academic and future vocational adjustment. Researchers at the Lebanese American University will integrate the YEY program into the educational curriculum for high school students within five public schools using a youth-empowering-youth model where sessions are delivered by youth leaders and facilitators to maximize community skill- and capacity-building.



Make Music Matter Inc.

Healing in Harmony

Institution Country: Canada

Implementation Country: Democratic Republic of the Congo

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

The South Kivu region in the Democratic Republic of Congo has been at the center of wars and armed conflicts since 1994. Over 70% of the population has limited access to health care. Mental health services, where available, are concentrated in urban centers, far from conflict zones or remote areas. Make Music Matter's (MMM) Healing in Harmony (HiH) music therapy program has been proven to be an extremely effective approach for dealing with anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and feelings of isolation experienced by survivors of trauma. MMM will create and test a mobile version of the HiH program to reduce the socio-economic and structural obstacles preventing young rural populations from accessing the tools they need to heal from their trauma.



Organización de los Pueblos Indígenas de la Amazonía Colombiana

Embracing the traditional and the western: indigenous youth's pursuit to promote mental well-being

Institution Country: Colombia

Implementation Country: Colombia

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Historical trauma, loss of territory, violence, discrimination, economic precariousness, and the breakdown of political, religious, and social institutions have had a significant impact on the mental health of Indigenous peoples in the Amazon region. Organización de los Pueblos Indígenas de la Amazonía Colombiana (OPIAC) will take an intercultural approach that combines western and Indigenous worldviews to promote emotional and psychological wellbeing in Indigenous youth in the department of Vaupés. Indigenous youth will be trained as community mental health promoters who will identify mental health needs and design and implement mental health promotion initiatives in their communities with support from elders.



Reinserta un Mexicano Asociación Civil

Mental health radio program and workshops for Juvenile Offenders in Mexico

Institution Country: Mexico

Implementation Country: Mexico

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Reinserta un Mexicano Asociación Civil seeks to promote emotional and psychological well-being and to reduce anxiety and depression in incarcerated youth through a cognitive-behavioral therapy-based mental health program. Weekly mental health sessions delivered within a custody detention center will focus on decreasing dysfunctional thinking and improving problem-solving and emotional regulation in incarcerated youth. Youth undergoing community reintegration will also be engaged in co-creating a radio program on mental health and psychosocial education that will be broadcast within the custody detention center.



Schizophrenia Research Foundation

Juveniles Accessing Mental Health Services (JAMS)

Institution Country: India

Implementation Country: India

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Despite the high prevalence of mental, neurological, and substance use disorders, youth in India's juvenile care and correctional facilities have limited access to mental health services. Lack of trained staff and poor linkages to mental health and other supportive services undermines the goal of correctional facilities to rehabilitate and reintegrate youth back into the community and reduce recidivism. Schizophrenia Research Foundation (SCARF) will create youth-friendly spaces (YFS) within care and correctional facilities to improve mental health literacy and linkages to services for youth. Mental wellbeing activities within the YFS will support youth in building positive life skills and resilience through experiential learning. Facility staff will be trained in managing an assessment, treatment, and management cascade and clear referral pathways to locally available mental health services.



Sembe World

A toolkit to enhance youth friendly mental health services in 9 Boko Haram affected communities in Cameroon

Institution Country: Cameroon

Implementation Country: Cameroon

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Boko Haram attacks in the Northern region of Cameroon have greatly affected community life, particularly for youth who are exposed to various forms of trauma, loss/separation of loved ones, school closures, and unemployment. Unfortunately, access to psychosocial care remains almost non-existent. Sembe World is increasing the provision of youth-friendly mental health services in Boko Haram-affected communities in the Northern region of Cameroon by establishing community-based psychosocial support networks of key community leaders trained in mental health promotion, screening for common mental health disorders, and providing lay counseling and referrals to specialized care with the support of a locally adapted toolkit.



Sense International India

Mental Health Awareness and Support Program for Children and Young Adults with Deafblindness and their Families

Institution Country: India

Implementation Country: India

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Deafblindness is a unique and complex disability where a person has varying degrees of hearing and visual impairment at the same time, causing challenges in communication, mobility, and access to information. In collaboration with regional partners across India, Sense International India (SII) will pilot a mental health promotion and capacity-building program targeting Special Educators and Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) workers, an existing cadre of community-based service providers for people with disabilities. SII will develop a mental health education curriculum intended to upskills Special Educators and CBR workers on recognizing signs of mental distress, providing strategies for coping and managing daily stressors, and building emotional intelligence in children and young adults with deafblindness and their caregivers.



Slum and Rural Health Initiative

BRAVE Heart

Institution Country: Nigeria

Implementation Country: Nigeria

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

The Slum and Rural Health Initiative's BRAVE Heart program is a community-led mental health program in Durumi and New Kuchingoro internally displaced persons camps in Nigeria. Using a task-shifting model, influential community members will be trained to identify and manage common mental health disorders using evidence-based strategies. The trained community members will provide group-based and interpersonal mental health literacy and psychosocial support to youth experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and depression.



Syrian American Medical Society Foundation

The Happy Helping Hand

Institution Country: Jordan

Implementation Country: Lebanon

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

In Lebanon, approximately 20% of youth experience emotional distress and negative coping. Many live in remote tented settlements, which makes integration into mainstream communities difficult. They also face financial and social challenges and a lack of access to preventive programs that support their overall well-being. The Helping Hand (HH) program aims to address these challenges by creating a supportive environment for youth to learn healthy coping strategies while also expanding their social support networks through peer connections. HH is a freely downloadable digital game that has been previously tested with Syrian, Norwegian, and American adolescents. This project will test the effectiveness of delivering the HH program in a blended learning environment with the support of trained facilitators.



The Governing Council of the University of Toronto

A virtual reality intervention to improve mental health literacy among refugee youth in Uganda

Institution Country: Canada

Implementation Country: Uganda

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Uganda is the largest refugee-hosting nation in Sub-Saharan Africa. The mental health needs of refugee youth residing in urban informal settlements remain largely understudied. Dr. Logie will pilot a mental health literacy and stigma reduction project developed with and for refugee youth living in urban informal settlements in Kampala, Uganda. The multi-level community-based approach involves training refugee youth peer navigators in Psychological First Aid, co-developing a culturally relevant virtual reality intervention to increase mental health literacy, and co-developing a mental health literacy toolkit with refugee youth to promote community wellbeing and reduce stigma.



Uganda Network of Young People living with HIV/AIDS

Improving mental health and resilience among children living with HIV in Uganda

Institution Country: Uganda

Implementation Country: Uganda

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

Stepping Stones with Children (StStwC) is a scientifically and socially innovative approach to supporting children living with HIV and their caregivers. The StStwC program covers a wide range of topics including psychosocial wellbeing, resilience, stigma, living with HIV, and preventing sexual abuse. The full original version of StStwC works with children aged 5-14 years and their caregivers over 29 sessions. The Uganda Network of Young People Living with HIV/AIDS will adapt and pilot the Stepping Stones with Children (StStwC) program for use with youth (10-14 years) in the Ugandan context and conduct a comparative evaluation of the full version and a less intensive version of the program to determine if the wide-ranging benefits of StStwC can be delivered more cost-effectively.



Ylabs Studio, Ltd

Tegura Ejo Heza: digital self-care to support mental health literacy and job readiness

Institution Country: Rwanda

Implementation Country: Rwanda

Funding Stage: Proof of Concept

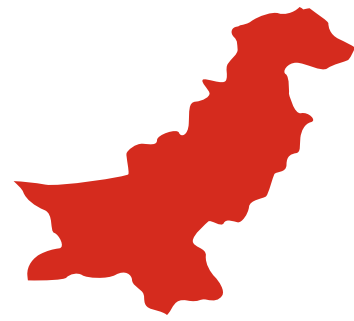
Ylabs Studio Ltd will build and test Tegura Ejo Heza (Prepare for a better tomorrow), a youth-driven and holistic digital learning and self-care platform aimed at increasing mental health literacy and access to psychosocial support for youth(10-19 years) in and out-of-school. Modeled after YLabs Studio Ltd's existing CyberRwanda platform, Tegura Ejo Heza will be co-designed and prototyped with the participation of youth from two urban youth centers in Rwanda using a human-centered design methodology.



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TRANSITION TO SCALE INNOVATIONS

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Interactive Research and Development Pakistan

Integrating a Comprehensive Mental Health Care Model within Maternal Health Care Service Delivery

Institution Country: Pakistan

Implementation Country: Pakistan

Funding Stage: Transition to Scale

IRD Pakistan seeks to integrate a comprehensive mental health awareness raising, screening, and service delivery program into primary care settings in Karachi, Pakistan. The model relies on a two-pronged approach that targets populations, both within communities and those visiting primary care facilities to increase access to mental health services among pregnant women and mothers. This model focuses on demand generation for mental health in low-income urban communities and mental health care service delivery within existing primary care facilities by lay workers who have been trained to deliver services effectively. Activities at the community and facility levels are enabled by a mHealth application that screens, tracks, and/or refers patients from the community to facilities.



Pakistan Institute Of Living And Learning

A digitally delivered culturally adapted low-cost group parenting programme for depressed fathers

Institution Country: Pakistan

Implementation Country: Pakistan

Funding Stage: Transition to Scale

The Learning Through Play* plus Cognitive Behavioural therapy program (LTP+) helps to enhance awareness of early developmental milestones while treating caregiver depression. A low-cost group intervention delivered by non-specialist healthcare providers; LTP+ focuses on promoting parental understanding of 5 areas of child development from birth to 36 months. The CBT component of the LTP+ intervention emphasizes thoughts and moods, activities, and relationships to help caregivers identify and manage depression. Under previous transition to scale funding, The Pakistan Institute Of Living And Learning (PILL) piloted a father-specific program, LTP+ Dads, alongside a traditional LTP+ maternal intervention. The primary aim of LTP+ Dads is to reduce paternal depression while equipping fathers with the cognitive and behavioral tools and knowledge to be effective in their role as co-parent. Using this funding, PILL will scale LTP+ Dads in all 18 towns in Karachi as well as prepare LTP+/LTP+ Dads for further government uptake and nationwide scaling.

*The Learning Through Play (LTP) Calendar was developed through a partnership between Toronto Public Health and The Hincks-Dellcrest Centre (now the SickKids Centre for Community Mental Health) both of which are indebted to Judith L. Evans and Ellen Ilfeld, authors of “Good Beginnings: Parenting in the Early Years” for the concept of the developmental time periods and the elements used in the Calendars.



Sinai Health System

EMPOWER: building the world's mental health workforce

Institution Country: Canada

Implementation Country: India

Funding Stage: Transition to Scale

There is growing evidence demonstrating that non-specialist providers (NSPs)—individuals with no formal training in mental healthcare—can effectively deliver brief psychological treatments for depression and other common mental health problems in a wide range of contexts. Dr. Daisy Singla (PI) and her colleagues (Vikram Patel and John Naslund at Harvard Medical School; Abhijit Nadkarni and Anant Bhan at Sangath) have developed a measurement-based peer supervision tool for front-line NSPs. In collaboration with technology partner Dimagi, the tool will be digitized and embedded within the EMPOWER platform, to support NSP-delivered care in global health. The EMPOWER platform provides support for treatment providers to deliver psychological treatments , by facilitating measurement-based, peer supervision to ensure quality assurance. This is a scalable alternative to expert supervision which is limited due to the cost and scarcity of specialists. Daisy Singla (PI) and her colleagues will scale digital peer supervision in primary care facilities in Madhya Pradesh and Goa, India.



Socios En Salud Sucursal Peru

The PIH Cross-Site Mental Health Learning Collaborative

Institution Country: Peru

Implementation Country: Lesotho, Liberia, Peru, and Mexico

Funding Stage: Transition to Scale

The Partners in Health (PIH) Cross-Site Mental Health Program and Mental Health Learning Collaborative (MHLC) focuses on increasing the reach and quality of evidence-based, culturally adapted, mental health services and ensures that health systems are equipped to support and manage quality mental health care. Through the MHLC, PIH site teams have expanded access to care, improved the quality of services, and piloted implementation strategies to strengthen the scope of mental health services provided to their communities. Using this funding, Socios en Salud (the Peru-based office of PIH) will lead the scale-up and digitization of the MHLC across nine PIH sites (Liberia, Lesotho, Mexico, Peru, Malawi, Haiti, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Kazakhstan) to reinforce global south-south collaboration.



StrongMinds Uganda

StrongMinds for Adolescent Mental Health

Institution Country: Uganda

Implementation Country: Uganda and Zambia

Funding Stage: Transition to Scale

StrongMinds treats depression in women in Uganda through a community-based talk therapy model based on group interpersonal psychotherapy (IPT-G). Under previous TTS funding, StrongMinds successfully adapted its IPT-G model, using a human centered design approach to treat depression and improve the wellbeing of adolescents aged 12-19. In addition to group talk therapy, the organization delivers psychoeducation to young people, their families, and teachers in an effort to break down stigma and address destructive gender norms. StrongMinds will expand the reach of the IPT-G model in schools and community centers in Uganda and Zambia. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, StrongMinds adapted their in-person group talk therapy to a phone-based teletherapy model, including a version specifically adapted for adolescents.



The Banyan

Home Again: Housing with Supportive Services for People with Psychosocial Disabilities Experiencing Long-Term Care Needs

Institution Country: India

Implementation Country: India and Sri Lanka

Funding Stage: Transition to Scale

The Banyan's Home Again program creates choice-based, inclusive living spaces for individuals with persistent and severe mental health issues who reside in institutions, many of them for a decade or more. Developed to provide an alternative to hospital and institutionalized care for their long-term clients who are unable to return to their original homes; the Home Again program provides individuals with peer support and linkages to a range of allied support services including social care, skills development, access to resources, access to healthcare, active case management, and onsite personal assistance. Using this funding, The Banyan will expand the Home Again program across eight states and the North East region of India and Sri Lanka to address the long-term care needs of people with psychosocial disabilities.



The Liberia Center for Outcomes Research In Mental Health

Enhancing Maternal Mental Health and Well-Being: Adapting ‘Thinking Healthy’ Intervention in Liberia

Institution Country: Liberia

Implementation Country: Liberia

Funding Stage: Transition to Scale

The Thinking Healthy Programme is a manualized psychological intervention endorsed by the World Health Organization that uses the principles of cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) to treat maternal depression. THP leverages task-sharing practices with lay healthcare workers to easily incorporate CBT techniques into routine antenatal and post-partum healthcare visits. The Carter Center and the Liberia Center for Outcomes Research in Mental Health (LiCORMH) have adapted THP for the Liberian context and will use this funding to deliver the intervention within Liberia's public health system and validate its impact on maternal depression outcomes.



Waves for Change Surf Therapy

Waves for Change

Institution Country: South Africa

Implementation Country: South Africa

Funding Stage: Transition to Scale

Waves for Change (W4C) is a mental health prevention program that combines surfing with evidence-based mind and body therapy for youth growing up in adverse environments in South Africa. Through access to safe spaces, caring and consistent mentors, and the provision of weekly surf therapy sessions, W4C teaches youth the skills to cope with stress, regulate behavior, and build positive relationships. Surf therapy is delivered by coaches from local communities who act as caring and consistent adults that youth can connect with and relate to. Waves for Change offers a blueprint for embedding sport therapy interventions within communities to address mental health in an accessible and stigma free way.



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