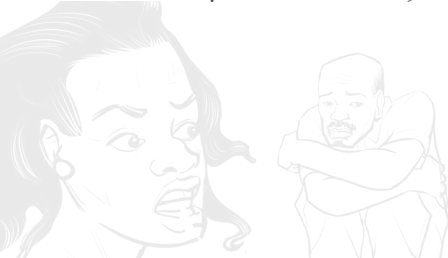


COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH HANDBOOK



MENTAL HEALTH UGANDA
Support our cause





Mission

To create a unified voice of people that influences the provision of required services and opportunities for people with psychosocial disabilities in Uganda.

Vision

People with psychosocial disabilities in society are embraced with respect and enjoy their human rights as other citizens.



PREFACE

Mental Health Uganda (MHU), is an indigenous, Non - Government, membership-based Disabled People's Organization, established in 1997 and formally registered as a National NGO in 2001. Our establishment was in response to the overwhelming marginalization, isolation and abuse of rights of persons with psycho-social disabilities/users of psychiatry services, and their families. Our mission is "to create a unified voice that influences the provision of required services and opportunities, in favor of people with and survivors of mental illness in Uganda". To contribute to this mission, we have done lots of advocacy work on rights of persons with a lived experience of mental health problems. However, the gaps remain appalling. Stigma remains widespread and entrenched in the communities we live in.

In these conditions, Covid-19 struck. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) "the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted or halted critical mental health services in 93% of countries worldwide and yet the demand for mental health services is increasing". While the demand keeps increasing, awareness on mental health or illness for that matter, is still so low. As a consequence, so many affected people have been abused and newly emerging cases do not receive timely support due to a lack of knowledge. The knowledge lag has never been as prominent as has been since lock down.

As a response, we have partnered with the British High Commission in Uganda, to produce this community handbook that simplifies the whole subject of mental health for the common man to understand. When people are made aware that mental health problems are diverse and can affect anyone, that proper diagnosis is necessary and invaluable, that some people can fully recover, that support is

available around us - the dire shortcomings witnessed in the current times will not be seen again. In this first phase, we have produced an English and Luganda version of this handbook, but with a view to cater for other languages in the long run.

We thank the British High Commission for financing this initiative, the Ministry of Health and Partners for the unending collaboration that helps to put our work to order and increasing the relevance of what we do.

We wish you a good and fruitful reading.



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Derrick Kizza Mbuga

Executive Director

FOREWORD

Close to 1 billion people are living with a mental health problem, 3 million people die every year from the harmful use of alcohol and one person dies every 40 seconds by suicide yet, few people around the world have access to quality mental health services. While access remains a major challenge, many mental health cases that we see are a consequence of a lack of understanding of mental health or mental illness for that matter. If communities had a fair understanding of mental health, we would have early detection and management of mental illnesses.

This handbook has come in so handy especially now that the impact of **COVID-19** on people's mental well-being has been so immense across the world, not only for those with pre-existing conditions but also created depression, anxiety and many have died, even more so here in Uganda. A document like this has been long overdue and I am so grateful to Mental Health Uganda for making this possible. Mental health has always been an area of great stigma and sharing information in communities will create a shift in attitudes because mental health challenges can affect any one of us and the impacts of COVID-19 make it even more likely.

I call upon all partners to support efforts that address the enormous mental health burden that we have as we draw towards community mental health care, to try and bring services closer to the people, while at the same time working through existing community structures to strengthen the existing clinical arm.

There is no health without mental health.



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Dr. Hasfa Lukwata

Ag. Commissioner Health Services
Mental Health and Control of Substance Abuse
Ministry of Health



INTRODUCTION

The general wellbeing of everyone greatly depends on their mental health. Mental health is just as important as physical health. However, majority of people ignore their mental health and do not take it as a priority and as a result, so many silently suffer from mental health problems. There are also a number of myths and negative perceptions on mental health problems in most societies. These negative perceptions have led to discrimination, stigmatization and the violation of the rights of those with mental health problems. Such negative perceptions need to be broken as these problems are very widespread and everyone is vulnerable and can

get a mental health problem. As such, it is the duty of everyone to know about mental health problems, how they manifest themselves and what should be done.

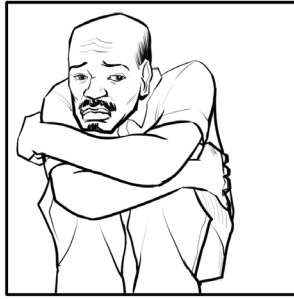
This handbook is a brief insight on mental health problems; what they are, the causes, signs and symptoms, and what one can do to support someone with a mental health challenge. It therefore suits everyone including but not limited to; community health teams, religious leaders, complementary healers, health workers, parents, family members, care givers but also persons with mental health problems.

What is Mental Health?

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines Mental Health as a state of wellbeing in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.



THINKS



FEELS



AFFECTS OTHERS

What is Mental Illness?

Mental Illness is a condition that impacts a person's thinking, feeling or mood and may affect his or her ability to relate to others and function normally.

According to the United Nations, millions of people worldwide have mental health problems and an estimated one in four people globally will experience a mental health problem in their lifetime. Almost one million people die due to suicide every year, and it is the third leading cause of death among young people. Persons with mental and psychosocial problems often face stigma and discrimination, as well as experience high levels of physical and sexual abuse, which can occur in a range of settings, including police cells,

prisons, hospitals, homes and others.

While mental health data is scarce in Uganda, current estimates reveal mental disorders make up 14% of the global burden of disease. About 75% of this is borne by populations in low and middle-income countries. Also considering that 78% of Uganda's population is under 30 years, mental health problems should concern us because 75% of all these problems start before the age of 24.



Who is likely to suffer from a mental health problem?

Anyone is likely to suffer from a mental health problem regardless of gender, race, religion, age, tribe and profession. However, some people are more vulnerable than others. These may include people with chronic health conditions, minority groups, and persons exposed to and/or displaced by war or conflict.

What are the possible causes of mental health problems?

The cause of mental health problems is not known, however there are a number of associated factors which can be classified into 2; hereditary and environmental factors.

Hereditary factors

Mental illness is common in people whose blood relatives also have a mental illness. Certain genes may increase one's risk of developing a mental illness, and life situations may trigger it.

Environmental factors

These may include but not limited to;

- ❖ Unhealthy relationships and effects like divorce/separation
- ❖ Living in extreme poverty including homelessness
- ❖ Violence (domestic, gender-based violence (GBV), and violence against children)

- ❖ Excessive consumption of alcohol and other harmful substances.
- ❖ Major negative life events such as loss/change of jobs or retrenchment / Loss of loved ones.
- ❖ Direct injury to the brain e.g. through accidents

DRUG AND
SUBSTANCE
ABUSE



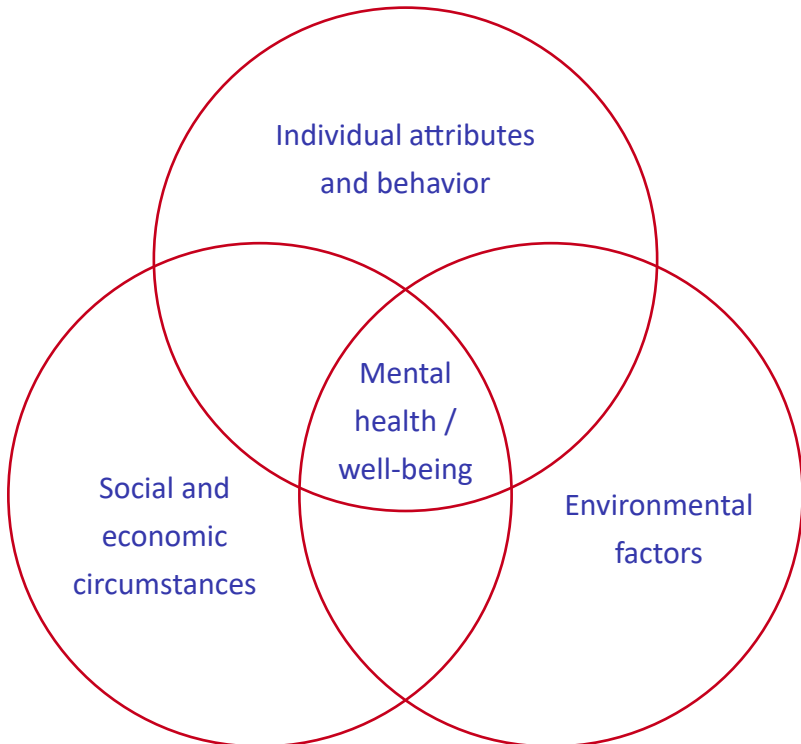
- ❖ Disasters such as landslides, pandemics, wars, etc.
- ❖ Chronic illness e.g. HIV, cancer etc.

Having one or 2 factors listed above, is not sufficient that you will have a mental health challenge in life, there will always be a predisposing, or perpetuating factor that will cause a mental illness in an individual.



FAMILY OF 5 LOST IN ACCIDENT

Mental well-being is achieved through a combination of factors (see below)



What are the signs and symptoms of mental illness?

EXCESSIVE FEARS, WORRIES AND ANXIETIES

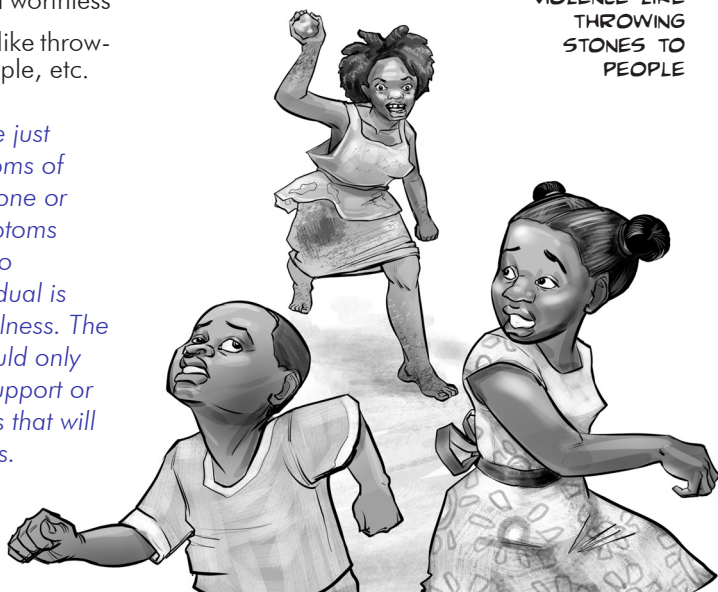


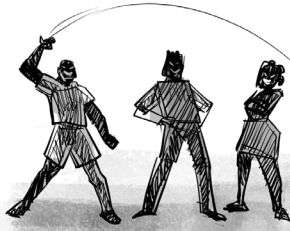
People with mental health problems show different characteristics. However, the common indicators that someone is developing or having a mental health problem include;

- ❖ Hearing voices or seeing people/ things that other people do not hear or see
 - ❖ Excessive fears, worries and anxieties
 - ❖ Social withdrawal e.g. from friends and activities
 - ❖ Being overly loud or shouting
 - ❖ Sudden changes in eating or sleeping habits.
- ❖ Suicidal thoughts or attempts (wanting to take away one's life)
 - ❖ Feeling guilty and worthless
 - ❖ Signs of violence like throwing stones to people, etc.

SIGNS OF VIOLENCE LIKE THROWING STONES TO PEOPLE

Note: Again, these are just a few signs and symptoms of mental illness. Having one or even more, of the symptoms above is not sufficient to conclude that an individual is suffering from mental illness. The signs or symptoms should only indicate the need for support or referral to professionals that will do further investigations.





Challenges that people living with mental health chall

STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION FROM FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

- ❖ Stigma and discrimination from the families and communities,
- ❖ Violation of their human rights
- ❖ Unemployment,
- ❖ Poor quality of care due to the limited number of Mental Health professionals,
- ❖ Institutionalized service provision,
- ❖ Weak enforcement of laws protecting rights of persons with mental health challenges,



UNEMPLOYMENT

Access to Health is my Right

The Rights of Persons with Mental Health Problems

The best interests of the person with a mental health problem should always be considered in upholding their rights, as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. The rights include but are not limited to the following;

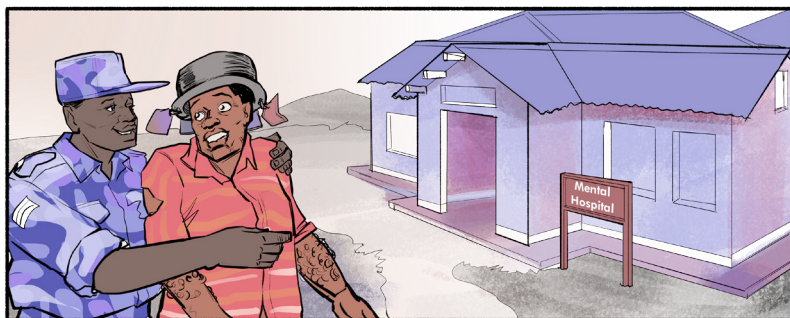
- ❖ The person, human dignity and privacy of a person with a mental health problem, should always be respected.
- ❖ A person with a mental health problem has the right to protection from physical, economic, social, sexual and other forms of exploitation and abuse.
- ❖ A person with a mental health problem shall be provided with care and treatment that improve his or her mental capacity to develop to full potential and which facilitate his or her integration into ordinary life.
- ❖ A person shall not be discriminated against, by any person, on grounds of his or her mental illness.
- ❖ An employer shall not discriminate against an employee who is a person with a mental health problem, on the basis of the mental health problem of that employee.
- ❖ A mental health practitioner who attends to a person with a mental health problem shall provide the person with all the necessary information such as information about his or her admission, the treatment to be administered, and the right to consent to the treatment, support groups and any other resources.

Note: *These are just a few and not an exhaustive list of all the rights. Persons with mental health problems should enjoy equal rights to any other persons as stipulated in the constitution of the Republic of Uganda.*

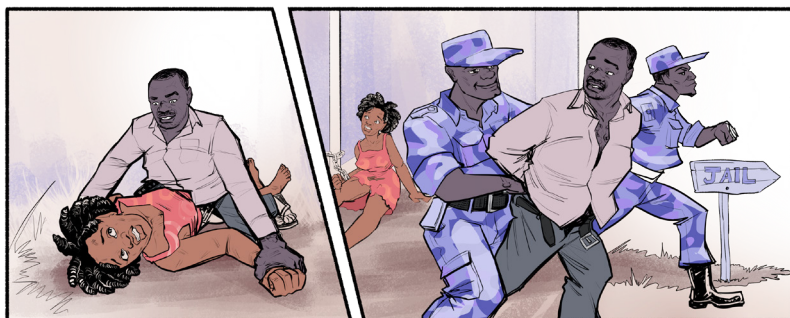


The Role of the Police in Protecting the Rights of Persons with Mental Health Challenges

The police have a duty to protect the life, property and rights of all persons including Persons with Mental health challenges. As such they should; -



REFER PERSONS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS



TAKE CLEAR ACTIONS TO STOP HUMAN RIGHT ABUSES TOWARDS PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS.

- ❖ Be kind and supportive to persons with mental health challenges
- ❖ Advocate for their rights.
- ❖ Talk about mental health challenges on all forums.
- ❖ Refer persons with mental health challenges to mental health service

providers and follow up

- ❖ Take clear actions to stop human rights abuses by others towards people with mental health problems, including supporting prosecution.

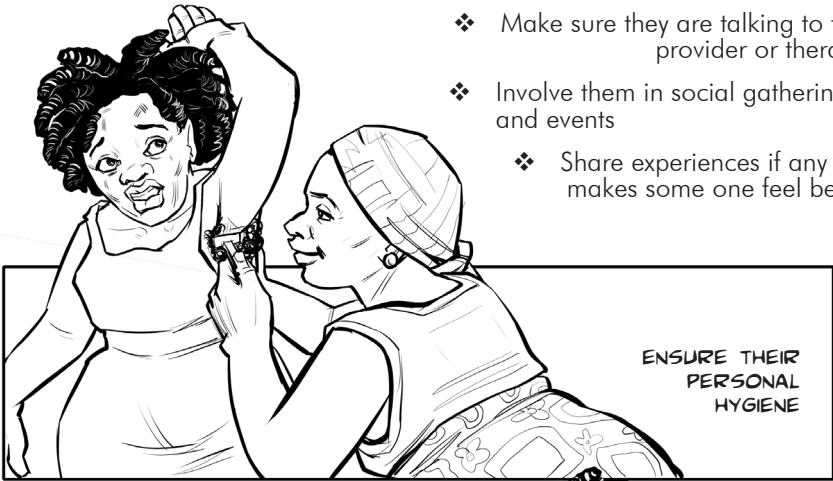


Powers of the Police.

A police officer shall not arrest or detain a person suffering from mental illness but shall take the person for an assessment of his or her mental health. The police officer shall then deal with the person based on the results of the assessment and where the police officer determines that the person requires treatment for mental illness, the person shall be taken to a health unit, by the police officer.

What can a family, community member, or concerned citizen do to support someone with a mental health problem?

- ❖ Tell someone you love them and support them.
- ❖ Tell them that they are not broken and they are the person they have always been, but they just have a mental health problem.
- ❖ Learn about their mental health problem
- ❖ Help them get treatment and support, as necessary. Escort them to appointments.
- ❖ Make sure they have and take their medication.
- ❖ Give them equal opportunities
- ❖ Encourage them to be positive about themselves.
- ❖ Ensure their personal hygiene and proper feeding.
- ❖ Advocate for their rights.
- ❖ Talk about mental health in all forums.
- ❖ Make sure they are talking to their provider or therapist
- ❖ Involve them in social gatherings and events
- ❖ Share experiences if any (this makes some one feel better)



Some of the things you should never say to someone with a psychosocial problem.

- ❖ That is small
- ❖ Stop pretending / acting
- ❖ You are just dreaming
- ❖ Medication is for weak people
- ❖ Are you a mad person?
- ❖ You will never get better

You could alternatively say...

- ❖ This must be so hard for you
- ❖ I am not sure how I would handle what you are going through, but if therapy seems a workable option, then go for it.
- ❖ How are you? Or I am here for you.
- ❖ Is there anything you think I can do to help you?
- ❖ I have been there too or I know someone who has been through the same (share experiences).
- ❖ With the right help, I know you will overcome this situation. Do not lose hope.

In summary

There is more to good health than just a physically healthy body; most of us agree that a healthy person should have a healthy mind. This can mean a number of things; the person should be able to think clearly, solve various challenges they may face in life, they should feel satisfied with the quality of their life and enjoy good relationships with friends, family and colleagues at work.

As earlier mentioned, mental illness knows no age, race, tribe or religion; it can be me or you, let's be kind and support people living with mental health problems.

Contacts

For mental health counselling, consultation, psychosocial support or legal advice you can call Mental Health Uganda on 0778 035 128 or 0701 748 185 during regular office hours. You can also reach us on our social media platforms on Facebook at @MentalHealthUg, Twitter at @MentalHealth_Ug and Instagram at mental_health_uganda.



We have put together the different offices different needs relate

Sector/Function	Office/Institution	Level
Health & Rehabilitation	All Regional Referral Hospitals	District
	All Health Centre IVs	District
	Selected Health Centre IIIs	Sub-co
Human Rights	Uganda Mental Health Advisory Board	Nation
	Uganda Human Rights Commission	Nation region
	Equal Opportunities Commission	Nation region
	Courts of Law	Nation
Protection	Police	District

Agencies or institutions that can be contacted, for access to mental health:

	Remark
	This also includes psychosocial support
County/Division	
Local Council	First point of reference in case of violation of rights of a person with a mental health problem
Local Council, with some District Offices	Has a mandate to investigate complaints of violation of Human Rights
Local Council, with some District Offices	has a mandate to investigate complaints on marginalization and discrimination of marginalized groups
Local Council, Districts	The Constitution empowers any person who claims violation of or threat to his or her rights to apply to a competent court for redress
Local Council, Subcounty	For cases involving children you can also call the toll-free Uganda child helpline "Sauti" on 116

In order to access diagnosis and treatment, please contact one of these 24-hour public health facilities;

Butabika National Referral Mental Hospital.

Plot 2
Kirombe-Butabika Road,
Kampala.

Tel: 0717 782 920
Tel: 0704 620 153

Mulago National Referral Hospital, Mulago, Kampala.

Tel: 0772 629 862

Kawempe National Referral Hospital, Kawempe Division, Kampala

Tel: 0753 851 410
Tel: 0779 108 512

China Uganda Friendship Hospital, Naguru, Nakawa Division, Kampala

Tel: 0704 288 080

Kisugu Health Centre III,

Muyenga, Makindye Division,
close to International Hospital
Kampala

Tel: 0774 706 396

Bukoto Health Centre III

Tel: 0776 700 542

Tel: 0751 757 568

Komamboga Health Centre III, Gayaza Road, Kawempe Division, Kampala

Division, Kampala

Tel: 0755 833 383

Kawaala Health Centre III, Kasubi - Kawaala, close to Kasubi market Kampala.

Kasubi market Kampala.

Tel: 0752 111 211

Kitebi Health Centre III

Rubaga Division, Kampala, close
to Wankulukuku football stadium

Tel: 0757 981 252

List of Criminal Intelligences (CI) & Community Liaison Office (CLOs) in kampala

Old kampala CI

0777733553

0755270899

OLD kampala CLO

0714-667798

0707-101546

Wandegeya CI

0772-928778

Wandegeya CLO

0714-667791

Katwe CI

0752-525085

CLO

0714-667793

Kawempe CI

0782-928510

0701-537214

Kawempe CLO

0714-667795

Jinja Rd CI

0752-088642

CLO

0714-667799

CI kajansi

0775618677

CI kabaragara

0774350828

CI CPS

0704-311833

CI Nateete

0704-421487

Kla Rd CI

0774-463746

CI Kla DV

0701-662031

0772-634145

Nansana CI

0752-411212

0779-838174

Please Note:

If your rights or those of someone with a mental health challenge are violated, please contact any of numbers from a police station nearest to you.

"If you or someone you know is at risk of suicide and needs urgent help, please call Doreen Kanyesigye on 0772 518 055"



MENTAL HEALTH UGANDA
Support our cause

Illustrated and designed by, EGESSA DERVIN



Something new

Comic books
Storyboarding
2d Animation
Story books
Caricature
AD Illustration
Design sketching
Sculpture

For any of these,
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