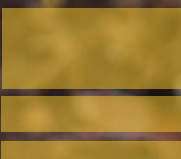


ANNUAL REPORT

2024



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

This annual report will enable MHU to effectively communicate, attract, maintain and utilize its human, financial and time resources toward meeting organizational goal.

The report focus on inspiring MHU to raise its profile, attract new supporters and donors through investing in fundraising initiatives, developing strategic partnerships, networking and engaging the mental health sector to influence sector financing.

©December 2024

Mental Health Uganda

Lungujja ,Makamba Zone, Kamanya Road Cell 15 House 58
|www.mentalhealthuganda.org

 [mental_health_uganda](https://www.facebook.com/mental_health_uganda)  [mentalhealth_uganda](https://twitter.com/mentalhealth_uganda)  [mental_health_uganda](https://www.instagram.com/mental_health_uganda)

 www.mentalhealthuganda.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
- OUR ORGANIZATION
- STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
- OUR WORK
- VOICES FROM THE FIELD
- STORY LINE
- PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
- FINANCIALS



OUR ORGANIZATION:

OUR VISION

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

OUR MISSION

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

OUR CORE VALUES

- **Accountability:** We shall have the obligation and willingness to accept responsibility for our actions.
- **Transparency:** We will be open and honest in all our engagement
- **Teamwork:** We will work towards providing support to one another, working cooperatively, and respecting one another’s views.
- **Respect:** We are committed to creating an institution and a society where everyone is appreciated and recognized
- **Confidentiality:** We protect information and earn trust, in accordance with the law.
- **Integrity:** We are truthful and reliable to all our stakeholders.
- **Non-discrimination:** We treat individuals and groups equally irrespective of their particular characteristics.
- **Equity:** We will provide an environment that is fair and just to all.

Our strategic objectives include:

- To influence policy, rights, and legislative reforms around mental health.
- To promote access to and utilization of mental healthcare services in Uganda.
- To build self-reliance and resilience for people with psychosocial disabilities.
- To reduce stigma towards people with psychosocial disabilities.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES





Derrick Kizza Mbuga
Executive Director

FOR EWORD

As we reflect on the milestone achieved in 2024, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the progress we have made together in extending mental health support across communities in Uganda. It is always an honor to see people with a lived experience of mental health conditions holding leaders accountable. At Mental Health Uganda (MHU), lived experience leadership is at the center of our efforts on policy reforms, awareness raising, research and reduction of stigma and discrimination in society today.

This year, our efforts to amplify the voices of youth with mental health problems have been truly transformative. Through our toll-free national counseling service, we have provided counseling and referral to over 8,000 young individuals aged 15–35 years from all regions of Uganda. This initiative has bridged critical gaps in access to mental health services, especially in the underserved and hard-to-reach areas. Our innovative tele-counseling model has not only addressed geographical barriers but helped many young people with no information about mental

health and availability of services. They would otherwise move on the continuum towards mental ill health and in need of clinical services that are often seldom accessible to many.

As you will read in the report, our joint program with SOS Uganda to increase awareness about mental health in schools has registered tremendous results. A considerable number of students in our 8 target schools in Gulu and Wakiso can openly talk about mental health, the challenges and are able to seek timely support from the peer champions or even focal teachers. We have also been able to see the schools integrate a mental health culture into their school routine through talking compounds, opening of mental health clubs, and designating safe spaces for students to freely talk to others about their problems.

However, this journey has not been without challenges. Rolling out some of our best practices to other districts of Uganda would require resources. There is also still slow progress on mental health financing in the local governments. Many districts are grappling with shrinking budgets especially post covid. Despite these barriers, our resolve to adapt and innovate has been unvacillating.

As we look ahead to 2025, our focus will be on consolidating our achievements and enhancing the sustainability of our initiatives. We plan to expand our livelihood programs to more districts in Uganda, institutionalize mental health programs in schools, expand our anti stigma campaigns through social contact, and extend our operating hours of our toll-free service to cover weekends and all languages spoken in the country. This will also help accommodate students who are often in school between 8am and 4pm..

Lastly, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our partners, the Norwegian and Danish tax payers, and dedicated staff for your unwavering support. Special thanks go to Mental Helse Ungdom Norway, SIND Mental Health Denmark, and Operation Day's Work Norway (ODW). This has helped to change lives in many communities across Uganda. Thank you for your support and for your belief in doing good. We simply couldn't do what we do without amazing people like you!

OUR PROGRAMME ACTIONS



MENTAL HEALTH UGA
"There is Strength in seeking Help
Talk to someone Today" ...

**AMPLIFY VOICES
OF THE YOUTH
THROUGH OUR
HELPLINE.**



belong

DIGNITY & RESPECT
within family, community & culture

RECOGNITION
by government and society
as an equal and valued human
and member of the community

OPPORTUNITY
to participate in decision-making
and culture

Prioritize
Mental Health
at the workplace

CENTRE
(SPU - TC)
HEALTH SERVICE

NEED TO KNOW ABOUT
PSYCHOSIS



Since September 2020, Mental Health Uganda (MHU) has been amplifying the voices of young people with mental health issues in Uganda. Through our innovative initiatives, we have facilitated improved access to mental health services, notably via our maiden toll-free national phone counseling service. This service targets young individuals aged 15–35 years with mental health challenges, as well as their potential caregivers, providing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) to over 8,000 clients to date.

With funding from the Atlas Alliance through Mental Helse Ungdom Norway, MHU has been implementing a five-year project aimed at empowering young people with mental health issues. The project, which spans four regions of Uganda, concluded on December 31, 2024

Successes

Expanded Access to Mental Health Services.The project significantly expanded access to mental health services for over 8,000 youth in underserved areas and refugee settings by pioneering tele-counseling during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite being based in Kampala, the system effectively addressed the mental health needs of youth in their local communities. This innovative approach ensured continuous access to support during lockdowns, establishing a benchmark for remote mental health service delivery in Uganda.

Introduction of an Innovative Tele-Counseling Model

8000

No of youth reached with mental health services in underserved areas and refugee settings

The project introduced Uganda's first tele-counseling model, which enabled counselors to provide ongoing support to 4,808 clients through 6,806 phone call sessions. This innovation overcame geographical barriers, offering vital mental health support to marginalized and hard-to-reach populations, including youth in refugee communities.

The project invested in building the capacity of counselors, equipping them with the skills necessary to deliver high-quality tele-counseling services.

This professional development ensured that mental health support was both effective and empathetic, even without face-to-face interaction, contributing to the sustainability of the initiative.

Collaboration and Synergy with Complementary Projects. By complementing other initiatives, such as the ODW project, the intervention leveraged synergies to enhance its impact. Peer educators were empowered to refer students to the counseling helpline for professional support, creating a robust referral system that strengthened the overall effectiveness of the project.

Challenges

One of the primary challenges encountered during the project implementation was the limited awareness among the youth population about the existence of the program. A significant proportion of the target group was unaware of the services provided, which hindered their engagement and

4,808

*No of clients who received
psycho social support via the
helpline*

6,806

*No of phone call sessions
throughout 5 years*

limited the project's ability to reach its intended beneficiaries across the targeted districts. This gap in awareness also highlighted the need for a more extensive outreach strategy to create visibility and foster trust among the youth and their communities.

Language barriers further posed a significant obstacle to the project's effectiveness. Counselors struggled to communicate fluently with clients from linguistically diverse regions, particularly in hosting districts in Northern and Western Uganda, where the languages spoken were unfamiliar to the staff.

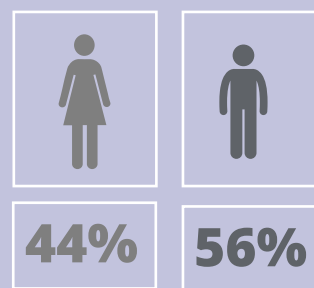
This limitation was compounded by insufficient staffing aligned with some districts, making it difficult to provide comprehensive and inclusive services to the entire target population. As a result, many potential beneficiaries were left underserved, undermining the project's inclusivity goals.

The negative perception of online counseling presented a unique challenge, given that this was Uganda's first tele-counseling project.

Many young people were initially skeptical about the effectiveness of the service, which discouraged them from seeking help. While the platform's anonymity did attract a significant number of men (56% of users compared to 44% women), it also revealed a disparity in utilization rates that contrasted with global findings indicating women's higher susceptibility to mental health conditions. This gender dynamic underscored both the platform's potential as a safe space and the need for further education to build trust and acceptance of online counseling services among all youth.

Additionally, the reliance on mobile phones as the primary medium for service delivery proved to be a double-edged sword. Many youths, particularly in underserved areas, lacked access to mobile phones, restricting their ability to participate in counseling sessions. This digital divide was exacerbated by inconsistent network connectivity, which disrupted communication during sessions and affected the overall quality

of service delivery. Moreover, operational constraints limited the counseling services to standard working hours, excluding a large segment of the target population—particularly students—who required evening support. These combined factors created a significant barrier to achieving the project's goal of providing accessible and reliable mental health services to Uganda's youth.



Percentage of anonymous calls

We are working to normalize mental health challenges, reduce stigma and discrimination, and provide access to psychosocial support in targeted schools and communities in Gulu and Wakiso. These initiatives are part of our Youth Mental Health Project, implemented in collaboration with SOS Children's Villages Uganda.

The project's goal is to strengthen the right to education and health for youth aged 13–19 years in eight selected schools across Wakiso and Gulu City. This impactful work is made possible by funding from Operation Days Work Norway, through our partnership with Mental Helse Ungdom Norway.

Successes

1. The intervention significantly reduced stigma and discrimination against individuals with mental health conditions and those working in the field. One teacher remarked: "Stigma has reduced; we are no longer called mad persons." This cultural change fosters inclusivity and acceptance in schools and communities.

Over 9,000 youth (13-19 years) across eight target schools have gained awareness of mental health and the referral system. Students now understand mental health disorders and where to seek help. As highlighted by a champion: "80% of students can talk about mental health randomly." This knowledge shift has empowered students to actively seek support when needed, reducing isolation and improving overall well-being.

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT TO SCHOOLS



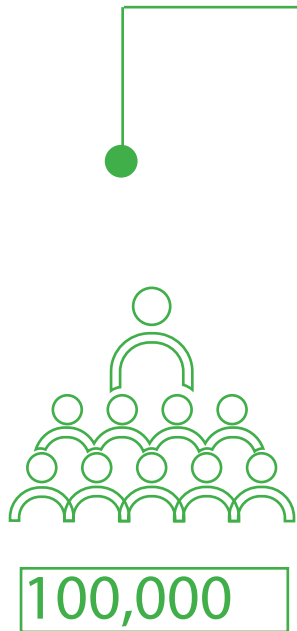


2. The project promoted behavioral change and discipline, reducing student dismissals due to issues like fighting and drug use. For example, one school saw dismissals drop from 27 to 7 per term. Improved behavior has positively influenced academic performance, with students demonstrating greater focus and attendance, as noted by a focal teacher: ***“Our students’ academic performance has improved.”***

Youth participation in advocacy activities like debates, radio talk shows, and public speaking engagements has nurtured confidence and leadership skills. Mental health champions have represented their schools nationally and internationally, advocating for mental health prioritization. As a champion stated: “Mental health awareness is key for academic achievement.”

3. The project has strengthened youth participation and mental health advocacy, nurturing self-esteem and confidence through activities such as debates, presentations, radio talk shows, and poetry. These activities have enhanced public speaking skills among youth, especially mental health champions, empowering them to advocate for mental health at school, regional, national, and international platforms. Key engagements include the National Mental Health Conference, National Student Leaders Conference, the launch of the mental health chatbot, and the International Day of the African Child celebrations.

NUMBERS



Number of People reached with mental health information through talk shows, community outreaches, and events.



161

Teachers and School Board Representatives received training on MHPSS, including key concepts, common mental health conditions, suicide prevention, trauma, mental health services, social-emotional learning,



48

31

Mental Health champions trained on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS),

Number of Youths provided with Psychological First Aid and psychoeducation in 8 target schools and communities,



1904



56

Youths provided with Psychological First Aid and psychoeducation in 8 target schools and communities, experiencing mental health challenges, were.

Lessons Learned

1. **Youth Ownership.** Actively engaging youth in project activities fosters a strong sense of ownership, which significantly enhances the sustainability of interventions. When young people feel a part of the process, they are more likely to initiate and sustain activities on their own. For example, youth-led initiatives such as ongoing mental health awareness sessions during school assemblies emerged organically, demonstrating their commitment to promoting mental health within their schools.
2. **Stigma Reduction through Awareness.** Empowering Champions and increasing mental health awareness among learners and teachers has played a pivotal role in reducing stigma. As Champions share their knowledge and experiences, they normalize conversations around mental health, fostering openness and understanding in previously stigmatizing environments. This has encouraged both learners and teachers to seek help and support one another.
3. **Consultation Enhances Impact.** Involving youth in planning and decision-making processes has been instrumental in the project's success. When youth feel valued and consulted, they are more committed to the project's goals. This participatory approach not only enriches the design and implementation of activities but also ensures that interventions are relevant and responsive to their needs.

Effectiveness of the Peer-to-Peer Model.

The Champion model has proven to be an effective and timely approach in addressing the mental health needs of adolescents and youth. By leveraging the power of peer support, this model creates an environment of trust and relatability, making it easier for young people to open up and seek help. Champions, being peers, can resonate with the experiences of their fellow youth, facilitating early intervention and support.

Challenges

1. **Tight School Schedules** The rigid and demanding academic schedules in schools posed challenges for implementing project activities. Balancing the need for mental health sessions with academic priorities required careful negotiation and coordination with school authorities.

Persistent Stigma and Discrimination Despite efforts to raise awareness. Stigma and discrimination surrounding mental health remain significant barriers. These societal attitudes discourage open discussions about mental health and hinder some students and teachers from fully engaging with the project.

2. **Limited Mental Health Knowledge.** A lack of sufficient mental health knowledge among teachers and students limited the impact of awareness efforts. Without a foundational understanding of mental health, learners and educators often struggled to grasp the importance of the issues being addressed.
3. **Challenges with Follow-Ups.** Coordinating follow-up activities proved difficult due to students' academic commitments and the limited operational hours of the toll-free service. These constraints hindered the ability to provide consistent and timely support to all beneficiaries.

Way Forward for 2025

1. **Consolidate Project Achievements and Enhance Sustainability within Schools**
Building on the successes of the project, efforts should focus on consolidating the gains made in mental health support within schools. This includes integrating mental health programs into school policies, training peer educators and school staff, and establishing student-led mental health clubs to foster a supportive environment. Partnerships with education stakeholders should be strengthened to ensure that the mental health services introduced during the project are institutionalized and sustained beyond its timeline.
2. **Strengthen Awareness Campaigns to Address Stigma and Increase Knowledge**
Addressing the stigma surrounding mental health remains a critical priority. Targeted awareness campaigns should be expanded to engage diverse audiences, including students, parents, and community leaders, to challenge misconceptions and encourage open dialogue. Leveraging social media, school events, and local platforms can amplify the reach and impact of these campaigns,

creating a society that is more informed, accepting, and proactive in addressing mental health challenges.

Adjust Toll-Free Service Hours to Accommodate Students

Recognizing the unique schedules of students, the toll-free service hours should be adjusted to align with their availability. Extending operating hours to evenings and weekends can better accommodate students' needs, ensuring they have access to support outside regular school hours. This adjustment would enhance accessibility and ensure that no student is left without the help they need.

3. Develop Flexible Follow-Up Strategies to Ensure Continued Support for Students. To provide comprehensive and ongoing support, flexible follow-up mechanisms should be developed. These could include periodic check-ins through phone calls, SMS, or virtual platforms, ensuring that students who receive initial support continue to be monitored and guided. Collaboration with schools and caregivers can further strengthen follow-up efforts, enabling a holistic approach to supporting the mental well-being of students over time.







**WE ENHANCE THE
WELL-BEING OF
PERSONS WITH
MENTAL HEALTH
CHALLENGES**

The Equal Access to Grants was an Innovation Project introduced to enhance the well-being of persons with mental health challenges. This initiative is vital as it empowers individuals to lead fulfilling lives by fostering resilience, enabling active participation in society, building meaningful relationships, and contributing to their communities. By addressing stigma and promoting social inclusion, the project also advances economic productivity and community cohesion. In 2024, funding for this inaugural project was secured from the Disability People's Organization Denmark through our partner, SIND Mental Health in Denmark. The project, implemented as pilot in Lira, directly benefits 542 members with lived experiences, supporting their livelihoods and fostering positive change.

Successes:

1. 542 members were engaged across the three clusters. This inclusivity ensured broader participation, enabling more members to learn and benefit from the workshops.
2. Our Members were empowered through the workshops to form groups, generate innovative ideas, and develop grant applications. The training enhanced their ability to participate in grant processes, with 110 applications submitted and 32 approved.
3. MHU successfully developed customized forms, including attendance and application documents, and began creating a membership database. This advancement supports systematic data collection and better tracking of member activities.
4. We mapped 10 service providers and highlighted existing community resources such as vocational training centers and mental health services. This knowledge is crucial for tailoring programs and forming meaningful partnerships.

The project has successfully facilitated 56 youth in Lira to access employment opportunities, significantly contributing to an improved quality of life within the community. By equipping these individuals with skills and connecting them to viable job prospects, the initiative has helped reduce unemployment and foster economic growth. In addition, efforts to expand the project's impact are underway, with plans to collaborate with the District Development Officer to support more beneficiaries. This partnership will help create even more employment opportunities for other community members, thereby enhancing the overall well-being and socioeconomic conditions in Lira

Lessons Learned:

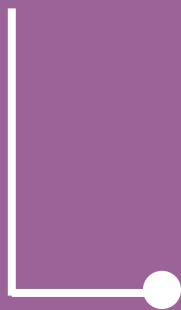
1. Revising the workshop structure to accommodate all members maximized inclusivity and participation, demonstrating the importance of adaptability in project planning.
2. Active involvement of cluster leaders in registration, group formation, and tracking systems showcased the value of local leadership in fostering project ownership and sustainability.
3. Providing data to stakeholders, such as the Principal Community Development Officer, demonstrated members' capacity and built trust, underscoring the importance of evidence-based advocacy.



4. Tailored training for both leaders and members directly contributed to high-quality, innovative grant applications, showcasing the link between skill development and measurable results.

Recommendations:

1. To address the financial gap and support more applications, MHU should seek additional funding sources, including partnerships with international donors and local government agencies.
2. Foster cross-sectoral partnerships with health, education, and social development sectors to amplify advocacy efforts and secure integrated support for persons with disabilities, particularly those with psychosocial challenges.
3. Expedite the completion of the membership database and integrate it with monitoring tools to streamline member tracking, reporting, and evidence-based decision-making.



Challenges:

1. Despite the high number of quality applications, funding constraints led to the approval of only 32 out of 110 applications. This highlights the ongoing need for more financial resources to support broader member participation.
2. The unexpected increase in participant numbers required significant adjustments to logistics and budget. While this was a positive indicator of engagement, it stretched resources and required immediate problem-solving.

The program in Lira has laid a robust foundation for enhancing the well-being and socio-economic participation of its members. Sustaining this momentum through increased funding and collaboration will ensure continued success and scalability.



WE NORMALIZE MENTAL HEALTH CONVERSATION

In 2023, Mental Health Uganda secured funding from VOICE to implement a project focused on normalizing mental health conversations in Jinja City through the “Social Contact” approach that ended 2024.

Social Contact involves a dialogue between a person with lived experience of a mental health problem who has openly disclosed their condition (a mental health champion) and someone who has not disclosed or does not have such an experience.

The mental health champions are individuals who have faced and overcome mental health challenges and are now willing to share their stories to encourage others who are silently struggling to ‘Speak Up’ and to promote kindness among those without such challenges.

Champions were selected from the MHU District Association, which included users of psychiatric services and their caregivers. They underwent training to understand the facts and myths surrounding mental health, human rights in mental health, peer support, Psychological First Aid (PFA), and the identification and referral of mental health

conditions. Following their training, these champions will lead Social Contact events in various settings.

Social Contact bridges the information gap within the community and challenge the stigma surrounding mental health. By openly sharing their experiences, champions will demonstrate that mental health issues are no different from other health problems, reinforce the possibility of recovery, and inspire those affected to seek help, which is our ultimate aim.

Successes

Significant strides have been made in advancing mental health and psychosocial support services in Jinja City. A total of 365 referrals were facilitated, connecting individuals in need to appropriate mental health and psychosocial support services. To enhance community resilience, 24 mental health champions were recruited, trained, and equipped with essential skills, positioning them as advocates and support pillars within their communities. Safe spaces were established and equipped, providing welcoming environments for individuals to share their mental health concerns and receive support.

Mapping of mental health and psychosocial service providers was conducted to streamline access and referrals, while a baseline survey was carried out to establish the current mental health status in Jinja City, offering valuable insights for future interventions.

In addition, 28 media professionals were trained to promote accurate and empathetic reporting on mental health issues, amplifying awareness and reducing stigma. Three stakeholder learning forums and six monthly reflection meetings

were conducted, fostering collaboration and shared learning among key players in the mental health sector.

Furthermore, critical resources were developed, including a Community Mental Health Guide and a Champions Manual, which provide practical tools for mental health advocacy and support. Awareness efforts were bolstered through the production of 15,000 posters and flyers, ensuring vital mental health messages reached a wide audience. These achievements collectively mark a transformative impact in normalizing mental health conversations and strengthening support systems in the region.



24

Mental Health Champions



240

Social contact events conducted



365

Number of referrals



4560

People reached through social contact

Future plans.

A key focus will be on strengthening partnerships within the region to bolster collective efforts in addressing mental health challenges. By collaborating with local and regional stakeholders, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, healthcare providers, and community leaders, we aim to create a robust support network for individuals facing mental health challenges. These partnerships will facilitate resource sharing, joint advocacy, and coordinated interventions to ensure that mental health services are accessible, comprehensive, and sustainable.

Another priority is the formal registration of the Jinja City Mental Health Association. This milestone will establish a recognized platform dedicated to mental health advocacy, capacity building, and service provision. The association will serve as a hub for uniting mental health champions,

service providers, and community members to advance mental health awareness and support within Jinja City. Through structured operations and governance, the association will enhance its ability to address mental health issues effectively and foster inclusivity.

Lastly, we plan to support rights holders by encouraging and facilitating their active participation in Alcohol and Drug Clinic Days at the mental health unit. This initiative aims to address the intersecting challenges of substance abuse and mental health, offering individuals a pathway to recovery and holistic care. By promoting participation, we will empower rights holders to access critical services, engage with healthcare providers, and receive tailored support, ultimately contributing to their well-being and resilience. Together, these plans will build on our existing achievements, driving



STORIES
& VOICES
FROM THE
FIELD

Stories

Transformation

Journey to Healing and Harmony

Robina Aceng, a 19-year-old senior five student at St. Charles Lwanga International Secondary School in Wakiso district, dreams of becoming a medical doctor. Studying a challenging combination of Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and ICT, her journey has been marked by resilience and transformation.

Separated from her parents at a young age, Robina faced emotional turmoil growing up with her siblings in a household rife with conflict. Frequent arguments between her sisters left her feeling scared, withdrawn, and unable to express her emotions. However, becoming a mental health champion through her school changed everything.

Armed with newfound skills and confidence, Robina chose to address the tension at home. During a heated dispute, she courageously voiced her feelings and advocated for a more supportive family environment. Her vulnerability sparked a change in her sisters, fostering open communication and restoring harmony to the household.

Robina's transformation from silence to advocacy highlights the power of mental health awareness. Her home is now a sanctuary of support, reinforcing her resolve to make a difference. As a mental health champion, she continues to inspire others, proving that courage and compassion can transform lives.

Championing Youth Mental Health

Tony Biryaba, a 19-year-old senior six student at St. Charles Lwanga International Secondary School, is a passionate leader and mental health advocate with aspirations to serve Uganda as a Member of Parliament and President. Inspired by his late grandfather, Tony leads with collaboration and service at the heart of his mission.

He holds several leadership roles, including Head Prefect, President of the Kigezi Regional Youth Parliament, and 'Mr. Teens' for the Kigezi region. His advocacy extends to media platforms where he champions mental health and climate resilience.

As a mental health champion under the Youth Mental Health project, Tony has spearheaded initiatives like rallies, school debates, and sports activities to engage young people. His efforts have reached over a million people in the Kigezi region, raising awareness and combating stigma.

Despite his demanding schedule, Tony remains committed to creating safe spaces for youth to discuss mental health. With plans to expand outreach, host a regional conference, and end substance abuse, Tony exemplifies leadership that inspires and empowers.

Overcoming Hopelessness: A Client's Story of Resilience

A young mother faced overwhelming challenges after being abandoned by her child's father. Living with her sister and struggling financially, she battled feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, and depression. Her child, living with less-privileged grandparents in the village, compounded her sense of purposelessness.

Through counseling, she received emotional support, cognitive reframing, and practical skills training. Mindfulness techniques helped her manage emotions, while cognitive-behavioral therapy enabled her to challenge negative thoughts. She also gained stress management and investment literacy skills, empowering her to envision a path toward self-reliance.

With renewed confidence, she began plaiting children's hair in her neighborhood, earning income and building capital. Her progress has been transformative, allowing her to prioritize self-care and regain control of her life. Grateful for the free counseling support, she now feels empowered to move forward with purpose and resilience.

VOICES

FROM THE FIELD

“Ever since the teachers received mental health training, they now talk to students to understand their behavior instead of resorting to punishment. This has built a bond between students and teachers and opened conversations beyond academics.” –

Director of Studies, Mt. of Olives

*“The majority of students now know and are aware of mental health and associated disorders. Eighty percent of the school can talk about mental health if you pick a student at random.” – **Frankline M., Mental Health Champion***

*“At the start, we were the ones looking for peers to offer support when we noticed they were sad, but now they look for us and ask for help.” – **Daisy, Mental Health Champion***

2. Reduced Stigma and Discrimination

*“Stigma has reduced. We are no longer called mad persons.” – **GeoffrO., Focal Teacher***

4. Positive Behavioral Change Promoting Retention

*“I had a stubborn student in Senior One who was on the verge of losing his place and scholarship. After engaging with him, his behavior has changed, and he has maintained his scholarship.” – **Emma K., Mentor Champion***

5. Improved Well-Being of Mentor Champions

*“The project has been therapy for me. At the start of this year, before I joined, I was an outpatient at Butabika. Through this project, I have found a healing hand in a peer I was connected to, and now my life is happier and more meaningful.” – **Akite Immaculate, Mentor Champion***

These voices reflect the project’s tangible impact on individuals and communities, highlighting improved knowledge, reduced stigma, stronger relationships, ositive behavioral changes, and personal growth.



As we reflect on 2024, we celebrate a truly remarkable year made possible by your unwavering support. Your commitment continues to be the cornerstone of our success, and we express our heartfelt gratitude.

We extend our deepest appreciation to the Government of Uganda, particularly the Ministries of Gender, Labour, and Social Development, Health (through the Mental Health Division), and Education, for their invaluable technical guidance and support. We also recognize the District Local Governments of Kanungu, Lira, Wakiso, Gulu, Jinja City, and Kampala Capital City Authority for their collaboration and dedication to advancing mental health initiatives.

Key Achievements in 2024

Thanks to the generosity of our funding partners, we reached over 25,000 beneficiaries this year. We are proud to acknowledge the following organizations whose contributions have been instrumental in transforming lives:

- Disability Peoples Organization Denmark (DPOD) through Sind Mental Health Denmark
- The Atlas Alliance and Operation Day's Work through Youth Mental Health Norway
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Netherlands (VOICE)

Our work has also been greatly enriched through collaboration with project partners in Uganda, including:

- SOS Children’s Village, Prudential, Humanity and Inclusion and the Mental Health Coalition

Expanding Partnerships

In 2024, we made significant strides in expanding our partnership portfolio. We initiated prospective engagements with several esteemed organizations, including BRAC, The Carter Center, Alight, Nation Media Group, Cheshire Katalemwa, and The Nabagereka Development Foundation. These discussions lay the foundation for future collaborations to amplify our impact.

Strategic Outlook for 2025

As we embark on 2025, we are excited to launch our new Strategic Plan, which will guide our focus on key areas:

1. Intervention in Refugee Spaces: Extending mental health services and psychosocial support to refugee communities.
2. Livelihood Expansion: Scaling our livelihood programs to additional districts to foster resilience and empowerment among vulnerable populations.

Mental Health Uganda (MHU) now boasts 34 district associations, and by the close of 2024, we initiated the registration process for all members. This exercise will provide an accurate database to enhance our planning, advocacy, and policy influence.

Funding Growth and Advocacy Needs

Our funding portfolio has grown to an impressive 6 billion Uganda shillings. Despite this growth, stigma remains a significant mental health burden. Addressing this challenge will require innovative approaches and strategic partnerships to normalize mental health conversations nationwide.

Call to Action

In 2025, we are committed to building on our successes and exploring new frontiers in mental health advocacy. We invite you to continue walking this journey with us—your support makes it possible to create a world where mental health is prioritized.

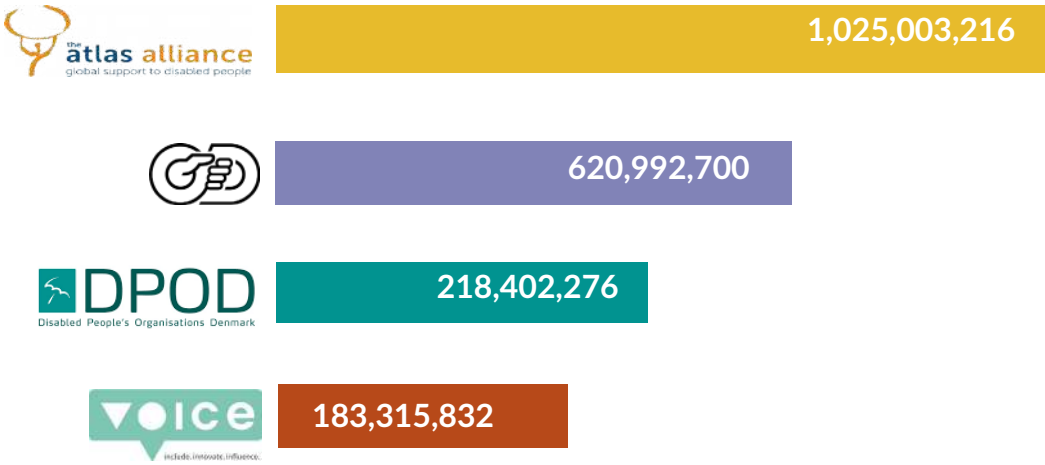
Together, we can foster a healthier, more inclusive society.





FINANCIALS

Donors



Annual Budget : 2,047,714,024.00

...S CHILDREN'S
...LLAGES

MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

...ngthened Right to Education and Health for Youth
... 18 years.

...ase Mental Health Problems, Reduce Stigma and
...rimination.

...sible Psychosocial Support Services in Schools.

...or Free Mental Health Counselling on
0800 21 21 21





CALL US TODAY FOR FREE MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

0800 21 21 21

8:30 to 5:00Pm