

Summary of the WHO-AIMS Project Proposal to Strengthen the Mental Health System in Burundi

This project proposal is based on the results of a comprehensive assessment of the mental health system of Burundi using the WHO-AIMS instrument. The WHO-AIMS report for Burundi is available at the following address: http://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/burundi_who_aims_report.pdf

Title of Project: Decentralizing and integrating mental health care into general health care by strengthening the capacity of primary health care staff to recognize and treat mental disorders.

Objectives: The project aims to enhance the capacity of primary health care and strengthen mental health services by integrating mental health into the minimum health services package in Burundi. Some specific objectives of the project include:

1. Raising the level of mental health training for medical students and primary care staff.
2. Improving availability and accessibility of psychotropic medication.
3. Improving monitoring and data collection of mental health activities.
4. Sensitizing the community to mental health issues.
5. Adapting legislation to allow doctors and nurses to prescribe psychotropic drugs and revising regulations to better protect mental health users against human rights abuses.

Expected Outcomes: The proposed project is a multifaceted project. Specific expected outcomes of the project include:

1. 68 nurses and 34 medical doctors at 17 provincial hospitals trained and able to provide mental health care through an integrated health services package.
2. 650 health centres with at least one staff member trained in mental health and able to treat mild disorders and recognize symptoms of severe disorders in order to make referrals.
3. 3000 community health workers trained.
4. Permanent stock of psychotropic medicines available in every provincial hospital.
5. At least one staff in every district trained on data collection and monitoring of mental health services.
6. At least one anti-stigma campaign organized each year to sensitize large communities to issues of mental health.
7. "Ordonnance ministérielle" signed, allowing doctors and nurses to prescribe psychotropic drugs and laws enacted to protect mental health users.

Expected Impact:

1. Improved quality of mental health services through a decentralized and integrated health care system.
2. Easier access to mental health services including treatment availability and access to medications.
3. Improved well being and reduction of disease burden.
4. Reduction of stigma and increased acceptability of mental health.

For further information on this project and resource requirements please contact:

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