

The Somali Mental Health Foundation (SMHF)

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Mental Health workshop

Conducted in Kismayo on 25rd -27th Jan. 2014

Implemented By: Kisima and the Somali Mental Health Foundation

Facilitated By: Abdikadir Khalif & Hodan Hasan

Acknowledgement

We are grateful to Almighty God who created us and who gave us the knowledge to manage our lives. We also thank Mr. Yusuf Bile for the way he coordinated the activities of the workshop. Last, but not the least, we are grateful to all the participants of the workshop, who came from different communities in Kismayo including religious groups, women and youth organizations, elders, police, local authority staff, internally displaced persons (IDPs) for their patience and for their active contributions in the workshop.



Facilitator, Hodan Hasan Kalif

Introduction

Mental, physical and social health are vital strands of life that are closely interwoven and deeply interdependent. As understanding of this relationship grows, it becomes ever more apparent that mental health is crucial to the overall well-being of individuals, societies and countries. Unfortunately, in most parts of the world, mental health is not regarded with the same importance as physical health. Instead, they are largely ignored or neglected. As a result, there is an increased burden of mental disorders and a widening “treatment gap” in the world. Today, around 450 million people suffer from a mental disorder such as depression, schizophrenia, and substance dependence, yet only a small minority of them receive even the most basic treatment. In many countries, most individuals with severe mental disorders are left to cope as best they can with their illness. Globally, many are victimized for their illness and become the targets of stigma and discrimination.

Further increases in the number of sufferers are likely in view of the ageing of the population, worsening social problems, and civil unrest. Already, mental disorders represent four of the 10 leading causes of disability worldwide. This growing burden amounts to a huge cost in terms of human misery, disability and economic loss.

In Somalia, a large number of people are affected with mental health disorder partly due to the trauma of war and socio-economic problems, or as a result of basic health problems. Kismayo is one of the worst areas where civil strife and internal conflict have been prevailing for almost 23 years, during which time many Somali tribes were competing for the control of its resources. Drugs and use of khat are also among the main causes of such mental health problems.

Despite the large number of people who are mentally ill, there has been limited attempts to support this large population that remain neglected for most precious time of their lifespan.

In response to requested from Kisima, a local NGO in Kismayo, the Somali Mental Health Foundation has to conduct a preliminary Mental Health Assessment on 25th -27th Jan and has also conducted a three days training workshop for most of the influential community groups, civil society and the local authorities.

The purpose of this workshop was to raise the local people's awareness about the problems that face people who are affected by mental health disorders, and to increase their basic skills and knowledge to provide care, treatment and any other available support to the affected people.

The Opening Ceremony:



Ceremony of the workshop in Kismayo. Kisima Chairman Mr. Yusuf Bile in the opening. Mr. Darwish Ministry of interior affairs and security of Jubbaland speaking in at the opening ceremony.

The workshop was officially opened with verses from the Holy Qur'an read by one of the participants. This was followed by Mr. Yusuf Bile who presented the workshop objectives and asked Mr. Darwish, Minister of Internal Affairs and Security in Jubaland State of Somalia, to open the workshop. In his opening speech, the Minister thanked the implementing Agency KISIMA Org and the Somali Mental Health Foundation Technical support. Then he informed the participants that mental illness really exists and increasing in prevalence. It is estimated that 1 out of 4 persons in the society suffer of mental illness and needs to be freed of the stigma and discrimination, and that mental illness must be seen like any other physical illness. Such workshops are fruitful since the community groups and other stakeholders are participants in the workshop.

We are people who live in a place where violence, unemployment and war dominated for the past 23 years; and today, war can erupt at any time but we need to intervene positively in the matter. This is very important occasion that many different community groups come together in one place and gain knowledge about mental health issue; this was never held in our town, so we want to take advantage of it and send a message to business people, international agency and other stakeholders to support the mental health programme and the workshops

And finally, he asked the participants to utilize the acquired knowledge and convey its messages to the rest of the community. Participants introduced themselves to each other after the opening ceremony finished.

Workshop Program - Work plan

During the workshop period of three days, the following topics were covered:

1. Introduction to mental health
2. Psychotic disorders
3. What do families do when a member develops psychotic illness?

This session was introduced by the workshop facilitator, who asked the participants about their understanding about mental health and Psychotic disorders. Cause was discussed intensively.

Many of participants hold the belief that mental health disorder is brought by 'JINNI', the devil, and that it could be treated either with traditional herpes or verses of the Quran.

Group discussion and presentation for participants



Workshop evaluation

The participants were asked to evaluate the workshop after its completion and asked:

- 1 Whether or not they achieved what they were expecting from the workshop?
- 2 What were the most interesting topics in the workshop?
- 3 What topics were to be excluded from the workshop
- 4 What topics are missing that you are suggesting to be added to future workshops?
- 5 How the workshop is facilitated?

Responses

- 1 99% of participants claimed they achieved what they were expecting

- 2 None of them suggested either adding or removing any of the topics.
- 3 They admired to learn most interesting topics during work shop

Evaluation method used and results

The mental health knowledge evaluation was conducted before the workshop and after workshop.

Pre-test

This particular pre-evaluation were conducted at first time of training by Quest. First test the participants were scored results bellow.

- 6 persons scored 40%-50%
- 14 participants were scored 30%-35%
- 5 people marked less than 35%

Post evaluation

This evaluation of test was conducted at the end of the training session. The achievements were as follows.

- 17 of participants scored 85-95%
- 8 of the participants scored above 65 -70%

Constraints

- Workshop session and participates were limited
- Workshop was new in the area

Recommendations:

- Increasing number of trainee including health workers
- Continue mental health training with enough time





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Methodology

The workshop involving participants using the following methodology:

- Facilitator's introductory lectures
- Brain storming
- Discussions and work group
- Flip chart
- Books and pens
- Active participation

Workshop Objectives

By the end of the workshop, the participants will be able to understand and utilize the following:

- Improvement in the community knowledge and attitude towards mentally-ill persons and to accept these individuals and their families as productive members of their societies that deserve every care.
- To increase awareness of key affected population and mentally-ill patients and other groups among the most at-risk people in Kismayo
- To reduce the stigma and discrimination about mental illness in community
- To advocate for their support