

Terms of Reference for the training on specialized protocol for the treatment of traumatic stress

July 2024

Background

Cabo Delgado has been grappling with a complex humanitarian crisis characterized by armed conflict, displacement, and insecurity but is also exposed to climate shocks. The region has witnessed a significant increase in violence, leading to widespread trauma and psychosocial distress among the population. The protracted conflict has exacerbated existing mental health challenges and created new ones, including but not limited to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, and grief. Studies indicate a high prevalence of mental health disorders among conflict-affected individuals¹, with limited access to appropriate care and support services. The conflict has triggered massive internal displacement², with hundreds of thousands of people fleeing their homes in search of safety. Displaced populations often face heightened vulnerability, including inadequate access to healthcare, education, and livelihood opportunities, further exacerbating their mental health and psychosocial needs.

Cabo Delgado faces significant challenges in terms of limited resources and capacities to address mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) needs effectively. The healthcare infrastructure is strained, with a shortage of trained mental health professionals and insufficient resources allocated to MHPSS services.

Justification

Cabo Delgado faces a severe shortage of trained mental health professionals, including psychiatrists, psychologists, and psychiatric nurses. Many individuals in need of specialized care are unable to access timely and appropriate interventions. Without specialized interventions tailored to their unique needs, vulnerable individuals may remain at increased risk of developing chronic mental health conditions and experiencing long-term psychosocial impairment. The complex nature of trauma, the high prevalence of mental health disorders, limited access to quality care, stigma, and cultural barriers highlights the critical need for specialized mental health services in Cabo Delgado. These services should be tailored to address the unique needs of conflict-affected populations and delivered by skilled professionals trained in trauma-informed approaches.

This justification underscores the importance of prioritizing and investing in specialized mental health services to effectively address the mental health needs of communities in Cabo Delgado.

Objective

The proposed training program aims to address the critical need for mental health interventions in contexts with limited resources.

- To equip trainees with the skills necessary to provide low and middle-intensity mental health interventions.
- To train participants in AIP-informed treatment procedures and protocols for early intervention and ongoing traumatic stress.

¹ Charlson, F., van Ommeren, M., Flaxman, A., Cornett, J., Whiteford, H., & Saxena, S. New WHO prevalence estimates of mental disorders in conflict settings: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Lancet*. 2019;394,240–248.

² <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/mozambique-movement-alert-report-106-17-26apr2024>

- To enable trainees to utilize treatment procedures effectively in both individual and group settings.
- Trainees will learn techniques for early intervention and ongoing traumatic stress management.
- The training will emphasize practical application and skill development.

Participants

2 groups of MHPSS staff will be join either the first or the second training (12 and 6 participants respectively). Participants will also be selected based on their global participation to the MHPSS TWG.

Participant Identification criteria:

- Work directly with beneficiaries
- Participate actively in the training
- Commit to apply the protocols
- Follow-up on the action plan after the training
- Must be able to create a relaxed environment for the participants through the ability to maintain a calm and non-anxious presence and attitude.
- Must feel comfortable being around distraught or “heavy” emotions, such as crying, sobbing, anger, and distress.

Work methodology

The training is intended to be participatory.

- Animation of training modules (PowerPoint presentation)
- Group work with restitution in plenary
- Case studies and exchanges of experiences
- Scenarios and role plays
- Videos and discussions
- Evaluation of participants' knowledge at the beginning and end of the workshop via pre-tests and post-tests.

1) Training –consists of the above 2 levels of training. Each level includes 1.5 – 2 days of classroom learning.

2) Fieldwork – Each level includes a fieldwork component where trainees will be providing the interventions in the field to participants of the organization’s programs or within their community. The group interventions will be provided to participants in a group setting with approximately 5-10 participants for each trainee. 1 to 1 fieldwork will be conducted for the individual interventions.

Holding of the training

The training will be facilitated by a consultant and supported by the MHPSS TWG. The training location would be in Pemba, Cabo Delgado. The training will be facilitated in both English and Portuguese. The training will take place beginning of July tentatively.

Supervision activities will take place in Pemba district with support of organizations working in the district.

Stakeholder Involvement

The Technical Working Group for Cabo Delgado will provide support and oversight throughout the training program. An EMDR-trained Approved Consultant will play a crucial role in training, supervision, and quality assurance.

Resource Allocation

Funding and resources required for curriculum development, training delivery, and supervision will be provided by the TWG which will also ensure adequate support for the successful implementation of the training program.

Evaluation and Reporting

- A pre and post test will measure the improvement of knowledge
- Structured field supervision will help monitor the practice of the protocols
- A final report summarizing the outcomes, challenges, and recommendations will be submitted by the Technical Working Group

Deliverables

- Training report
- Completed pre and post training tests
- Evaluation of participants' satisfaction following the training
- Pictures of the session