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## **Why we exist?**

According to WHO report, (2017) entitled “Depression and other common mental disorders: Global Health Estimates”, Uganda has been ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in Africa with the highest cases of mental disorders.

The World Health Organization’s global status report on Alcohol, 2014 stated that Uganda has one of the highest alcohol and substance abuse rates in the World. With over half of Uganda’s population aged below 24 years, school going adolescents and young people are part of these statistics.

Various factors have been mentioned to lead to mental disorders. These include interpersonal problems in marriage and relationships, economic difficulties, sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls, unemployment, poor housing in cities and chronic health conditions such as HIV/AIDS, cancer and other illnesses. Owing to the increased cases of mental health disorders and the after effects such as suicide, mental health awareness and beyond highlighted the need for increased community awareness so that community members can recognize signs of psychological distress, including signs of increased risk for suicide among relatives so that they can quickly take them for professional mental health care before they get to the final stage of the suicidal spectrum. However, these services are lacking (Jjingo, 2015).

It is against these that MHAAB Uganda exists with an aim of combining efforts with other stake holders to lend a helping hand in scaling down the magnitude of mental health disorders that are increasing at alarming rate in urban and rural settings alike.

## **BACKGROUND**

Mental health awareness and beyond (MHAAB) is non-governmental, non-partisan and not for profit organization. It was created in June 2016 with an aim of promoting mental health and awareness and preventing mental disorder. This was after realizing how clients with mental illness were neglected and abandoned by their own families and communities in hospital even after recovery. It was duly incorporated in November 2017 with registrar of companies and is fully registered under the Republic of Uganda the Non-Governmental Organizations Act, 2016 as a national NGO.

## **VISION**

Empowering communities to promote mental health and prevent mental health disorders.

## **MISSION**

To increase mental health awareness, contributing to reduction of mental disorders and stigma and improve mental health seeking behavior in communities.

## **GOAL**

Our goal is to promote mental health in our communities by laying down strategies for prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS infection and reduction of stigma and discrimination to individuals and families.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- ✓ To raise public awareness for mental health promotion and mental disorders prevention.
- ✓ To enhance mental health training and capacity building in our communities
- ✓ To conduct research geared towards causes, prevention and treatment of mental diseases

- ✓ To promote rehabilitation programs for mentally sick victims who are recovering.
- ✓ To advocate for the disadvantaged children and promote their human rights to free quality education, social justice and other related services.
- ✓ To raise public awareness for sexual and gender-based violence prevention
- ✓ To improve health seeking behavior for victims of torture and sexual abuse in the community.
- ✓ To initiate and support activities in mental health promotion addressing issues of substance abuse and drug addiction among adolescents and the youths.
- ✓ To enhance HIV/AIDS prevention trainings and capacity building in our communities.
- ✓ To reduce stigma and discrimination towards individuals living with HIV/AIDS in communities.

## **OUR APPROACH**

MHAAB employs bio psycho social –spiritual model approach. This is achieved through multidisciplinary collaborations.

## **ACTIVITIES FOR ORGANISATION**

- ☐ TV and Radio Talk Shows
- ☐ Community outreaches
- ☐ HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns and referrals
- ☐ Behavioral change communication and advocacy
- ☐ Consultations and treatment
- ☐ Girl child and women empowerment activities

- ☐ Psychotherapy and counseling interventions
  - ☐ Home visits and follow up of clients in rehab centers
  - ☐ School outreaches
  - ☐ Mentorship and trainings.
  - ☐ Substance abuse and drug addiction treatment
- Publication of manuals and user guides on mental health promotion
- ☐ Conducting research

## **TARGET GROUPS**

- Persons with disabilities.
- Drug addicts
- In school and out of school children
- Abandoned and neglected children.
- Women and men under any form of violence
- Prisoners and Wardens
- HIV/AIDS clients
- Young sex workers.
- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Road construction workers.