



Mental Health and Psychosocial Support SWG Meeting Report.

MHPSS PREPAREDNESS AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TO RESPONSE TO THE COVID – 19 OUTBREAK

Musa Abba | CATAI | 17th/3/2020

REPORT

The meeting took place at the Borno state public health emergency operation centre (Eye Hospital), the meeting began at 10:00am on Tuesday morning, it started with the opening prayer, and then the printed copy of the agenda of the meeting was distributed to all in attendance together with a memo and pen. After the opening prayer, the Chairman gave the welcoming remarks and all the participants introduced themselves by stating their names, name of the organization they work with, and position held in the organization.

- ✚ Miss. Deborah of **IOM** proceeded to discuss the measures IOM was taking to sensitize their staff on measures to take against the deadly “Coronavirus”, and how to provide psychosocial support to people affected by the virus.
- ✚ **LCDI** discussed on how they were trying to strategize themselves on how to provide MHPSS in all their camps, they are also in the process of equipping professionals to handle MHPSS on covid-19.
- ✚ **IA** has trained community leaders on MHPSS & hygiene to prevent the spread of Coronavirus and other deadly viruses like Lassa fever.
- ✚ **RCRC** discussed how they were conducting mapping of actors in Mongono & RAN communities, and they also invited any organization interested in taking up MHPSS services in RAN & Dikwa to notify them and they would be glad to offer any assistance needed. They also mentioned that they were having meetings with UMTM for physical & mental rehabilitation.
- ✚ **Street Child** discussed on how they working to distinguish between Psychosocial Services (PSS) and Mental Health Services. They do assessments when cases are brought to them and if symptoms are found they are referred to professional health care personnel.
- ✚ **A government Official** suggested that organizations putting together trainings should alert other organizations so that interested parties can join in and be better equipped to take-over territories other NGO’s have pulled out from.
- ✚ Miss. Deborah then collected the Microphone again and made emphasis on preventing stigma in people affected by the deadly virus, she used herself as an example, mentioning that she is from Asia and the Covid-19 originated from Asia,

so people shouldn't be afraid to come in contact with her as she has not left Nigeria in Over a year. The Chairman of the occasion also reiterated the importance of preventing stigma and sighed an example where a Lassa fever patient was left alone without MHPSS and he decided to go into communities to spread the virus so that he wouldn't be the only one affected.

SENSITIZATION ON MEASURES TO TAKE TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS

Coronaviruses (Covid-19) are a large family of viruses that cause a series of illnesses ranging from the common cold to diseases as severe as the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory syndrome (SARS).

SYMPTOMS

The symptoms Include Fever, cough, shortness of breath, and breathing difficulties.

PREVENTION

In order to prevent the spread of corona virus people are advised to take the following precautions:

- i. Frequent hand washing with Soap and water or Alcohol based hand sanitizers.
- ii. Maintain a social distance when coming in contact with sick people as the virus can move from a 10 meter radius from the infected person.
- iii. Avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth as these are the pathways the disease can use to enter the body.
- iv. Practice respiratory hygiene.
- v. Seek immediate medical attention if showing any symptoms.
- vi. If possible try and reduce handshakes and find replacements to use as greetings, e.g. waving, closed fist salutes (alangubro), or putting together the palms like the Asians do.

Insight on the Virus

Coronaviruses are a group of viruses that cause illnesses as mild as the common cold, or as severe as the MERS or SARS. The word "CORONA" is derived from the Latin word for crown, the virus existed for a long time in animals, it only recently made a leap to humans. The Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) originated from Camels, while the Severe

Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) originated from wild cats. The Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome originated from a live animal market in china, so far no treatments or vaccines have been found.

Sharing Session

- ✦ **IOM** emphasized that we should work on creating awareness instead of fear, they also made emphasis in creating awareness among women and children.
- ✦ **Give Africa** encouraged NGO's to move available funds towards the management of Covid-19 and notify their donors and partners of their plans afterwards.
- ✦ **Reach Initiative** conducted a brief expose on Multi-Sector assessment, Gareth Walley, a junior assessment officer with the organization invited interested organizations to contact them via his email Gareth-Walley@reach-initiative.org
- ✦ **Save the Children Initiative** did a brief presentation on the MHPSS activities they were working on.
- ✦ **Borno State Agency for the Control of HIV/AIDS (Borno SACA)** also did a brief presentation on the activities they were conducting, and he called for partners to help propel their cause.