

PROJECT FACTSHEET

Bosnia and Herzegovina June 2016

IMPROVING THE WELL-BEING OF PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS COUNTRY-WIDE



Mental Health Project in Bosnia and Herzegovina supports the reform of mental health care services in BiH in order to improve the well-being of people with mental health problems and those at risk of developing them. The project aims to reduce discrimination of people with mental health problems, enhance their social inclusion, and increase access to and quality of the much needed care.

In BiH people with mental health problems belong to a highly disadvantaged and vulnerable group. They face discrimination and social exclusion on a daily basis and have limited access to adequate care. Mental health service providers at the community levels lack special skills necessary to conduct psychotherapy, occupational therapy, and to work with juvenile patients and family violence victims. Thus, the scope of care available to people with mental health problems is rather limited. Furthermore, it is necessary to strengthen preventive care, as identifying early symptoms could prevent mental illness from becoming severe.

BETTER QUALITY OF SERVICES AND COMMUNITY ANTI-STIGMA PROGRAMS

Focus of the project is on mental health services at the community level, improving the scope and quality of those services, and accrediting the community centres for standardized and quality care they provide. Mental health professionals are educated and enhance their skills and knowledge in occupational and work therapy, psychotherapy, preventive work in the community, crisis interventions, and work with families. This will ensure that people with mental health problems and those at risk of developing such problems have access to a wider range of quality services. In order to decrease discrimination against people with mental health problems and raise respect for their human rights, the project works closely with different associations to conduct social inclusion activities and community anti-stigma programs, and develops programs for promotion of mental health.

Over 500 mental health professionals, working in 68 Community Mental Health Centres country-wide, are included in the project. Additionally, support is provided for associations and self-help groups of mental health service users in 29 municipalities. Mental health institutions receive support in enhancing their management capacities and re-organisation of services. Strategic steering of the project's interventions is with the health authorities in BiH. By engaging with these numerous actors, the project contributes to improving the quality of life of people with mental health problems, their families, and of those at risk of developing mental health problems.



CONTINUOUS SUPPORT AND PROGRESS WITHIN MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN BIH

The Government of Switzerland has been supporting the reform of mental health care in BiH since 2009. With previous project's interventions significant results have been achieved.

The policy and regulatory framework for mental health care in BiH was aligned with European standards and the system for monitoring population's mental health was established. In both entities, the legal framework for protection of human rights of people with mental health problems was revised and adopted. This enables monitoring of human rights violations of patients in mental health institutions.

Within the Community Mental Health Centres, the percentage of nurses who are working independently with patients has increased from 29% to 88%. The quality of services has been improved and the hospital referrals rate of patients has decreased by 30%. Furthermore, over 1'000 patients with severe mental disorders have benefited from the case management approach which was introduced into the work of Community Mental Health Centres.

THE PROJECT IN BRIEF

NAME:
Mental Health Project in BiH

DOMAIN:
Health

THEME:
Health

LAND/REGION:
Bosnia and Herzegovina

PARTNERS:
Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ministries of Health (entity and cantonal) & Department for Health of Brcko District
Public Health Institutes (entity)
Agencies for Accreditation and Quality in Health (entity)
Associations of nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers
Associations of users of mental health services

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER:
Association XY, BiH

STARTING POINT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In BiH people with mental health problems belong to a highly disadvantaged and vulnerable group, facing discrimination and social exclusion on a daily basis. A scope of care available to them is rather limited. Continuous and targeted education for mental health professionals is highly necessary, as well as outreach services and inclusion programs at the community level.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:

Strengthen the mental health services at the community level and improve the scope and quality of services. Educate mental health professionals on specific topics of occupational and work therapy, psychotherapy, preventive work and service outreach, crisis interventions, and work with families. Implement social inclusion activities and community anti-stigma programs.

TARGET GROUP:

500 mental health professionals and 68 Community Mental Health Centres; Associations and self-help groups of users of mental health services in 29 municipalities; mental health authorities and institutions; people with mental health problems and their families, and people at risk of developing mental health problems.

COSTS:
CHF 9'218'000

DURATION:
05.06.2009 – 28.02.2018 (end of the current phase)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS

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