

BEYOND STIGMA IN TANZANIA PROJECT REPORT

Project Name: Beyond Stigma in Tanzania

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Beyond Stigma in Tanzania project was initiated to address the critical issue of mental health stigma, with a specific focus on the lack of understanding surrounding autism and depression in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Over the past few months, we have made substantial progress by raising awareness and fostering inclusivity through diverse initiatives. Our efforts have included the provision of stress and depression educational workshops for workers, facility improvements at a local autism center, partnerships with local NGOs, and the successful execution of the Expressions of Hope: Art for Mental Health Awareness event. These activities have collectively advanced our goal of creating a more informed and supportive community.

2. Project Overview

2.1 Project Objectives

- **Raise Awareness of Autism and Depression**
- **Improve Facilities at Local Autism Centres**
- **Mental Health Training for Workers**
- **Establish Mental Health Clubs in Schools**
- **Organize Art Expression Day**
- **Comprehensive Project Assessment**
- **Seek Partnerships and Sponsorships**

2.2 Key Achievements

- ➔ **Solar Light Installations:** Installed solar lights at the government autism center in Mtoni Mbagala to support children with autism and other sensory sensitivities during power outages. After consulting with the center, we identified that frequent power cuts were disrupting activities and causing discomfort. Solar lights were chosen as the most

effective solution, and we successfully purchased and installed them, ensuring a stable and well-lit environment for both children and staff.

- **Provision of Workshops for Workers:** Held workshops at Claritas International and Mbezi Garden Hotel in both English and Kiswahili to ensure all workers could participate. Topics covered autism, mental health stigmas and stereotypes in Tanzania, as well as stress and autism coping strategies. Psychologists were involved to provide in-depth insights, enhancing the quality of the sessions. The workshops also included open discussions, with active participation from workers who showed strong interest in attending future sessions.

- **Art Expression Day:** hosting the Art for Mental Health event was a major achievement. It featured educational sessions, performances, and art activities to raise awareness and support for mental health. We collaborated with Nafasi Art for the venue, partnered with Mental Health Tanzania for professional education, and worked with the SALT Foundation, which was launching a supermarket for additional fundraising. The event successfully raised funds, deepened understanding of mental health, and showcased our commitment to education and community engagement.

- **Creation of Inclusion Clubs:** Established ten clubs in both secondary and primary schools to support the Beyond Stigma in Tanzania mission. The clubs monitor mental health awareness efforts, seek sponsorships and organize fundraising, partner with local NGOs, and provide educational courses and workshops. These actions ensure ongoing engagement, resource support, and project sustainability.

3. Event Highlight: Expressions of Hope

3.1 Event Overview

Expressions of Hope: Art for Mental Health Awareness was held on July 27, 2024, at Nafasi Art Space, an open art gallery in Tanzania. The event aimed to engage a diverse audience in a creative and educational experience that highlighted the challenges and potential of individuals with mental health disorders.

3.2 Event Activities

- **Educational Sessions:**
 - ❖ **Psychotherapist Session:** focused on autism in Tanzania, addressing the stigma and stereotypes surrounding mental health disorders.

- ❖ **Psychologist Session:** Discussed mental health for both youth and adults, emphasizing the importance of mental health care in Tanzania.
- **Performances:**
 - ❖ Children from SALT Foundation performed a dance routine, demonstrating the abilities of individuals on the autism spectrum when empowered.
- **Fundraising:**
 - ❖ A fundraising session raised 350,000 TZS for the SALT Foundation, directly benefiting the children who participated in the event.
- **Art Session:**
 - ❖ Participants were invited to express their understanding of mental health through painting, creating a visual dialogue about mental health and its impact on individuals and communities.

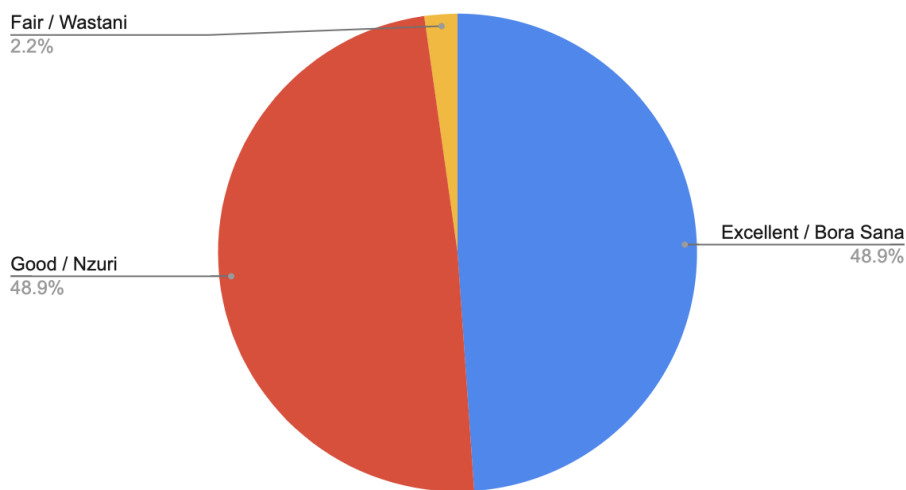
3.3 Feedback Analysis

At the end of the event, feedback forms were distributed to participants. The responses were analyzed to clearly understand the event's impact and help us strategise and improve our initiative. The reflections question in both English and Swahili aimed to be inclusive and accessible to a diverse audience

➤ How would you rate your overall experience at the event?

Ugelinganisha vipi uzoefu wako kwa ujumla kwenye tukio hili?

How would you rate your overall experience at the event?



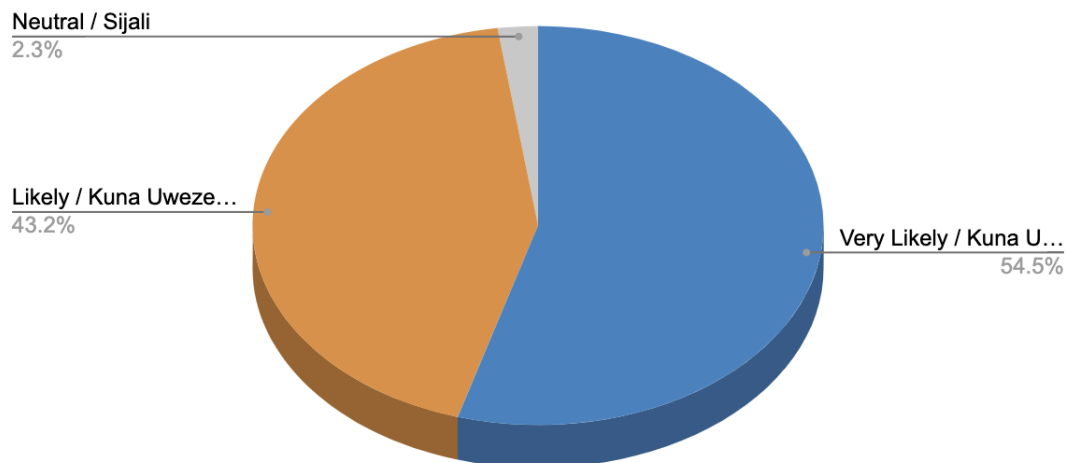
The chart reveals a highly positive reception, with 48.9% of attendees rating their overall experience as "Excellent/Bora Sana" and another 48.9% as "Good/Nzuri." Only 2.2% rated the

event as "fair/wastani," and no one chose "poor/Duni" or "very poor/Duni Sana." This overwhelmingly positive feedback indicates that the event was successful in engaging the audience and making a significant impact in promoting mental health awareness. However, the small percentage of attendees who rated the event as "fair" suggests that there is still room for improvement in future events.

➤ **How likely are you to use the strategies you learned in your daily life?**

Je, kuna uwezekano gani wa wewe kutumia mikakati uliyojifunza katika maisha yako ya kila siku?

How likely are you to use the strategies you learned in your daily life?

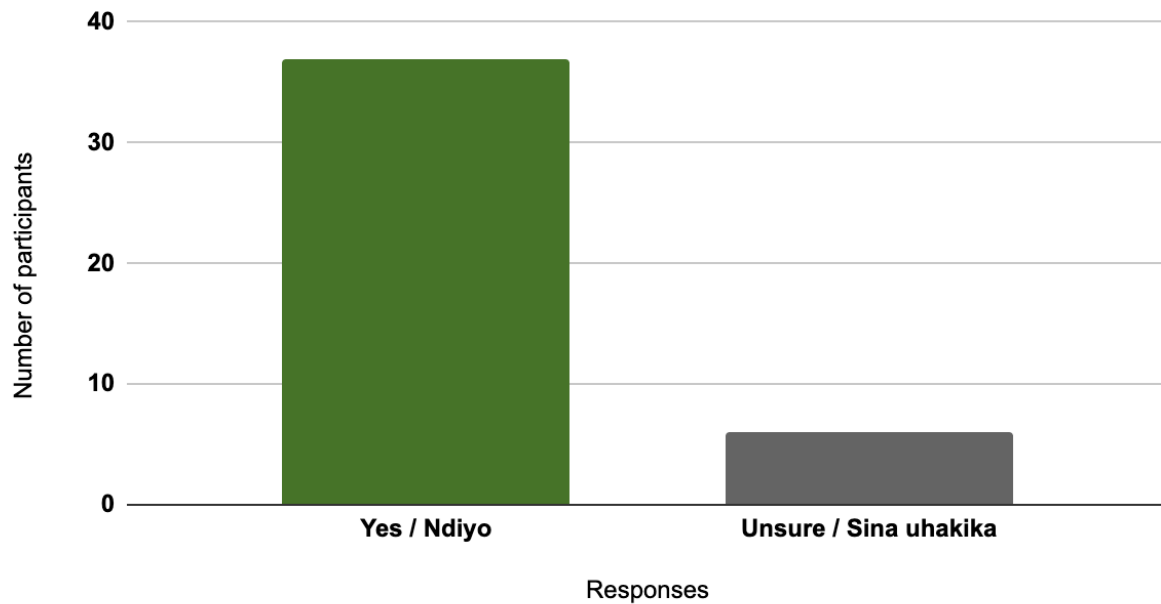


According to the survey results, 54.5% of respondents indicated they are "very likely" to use the strategies, while 43.2% reported they are "likely" to implement them. A small fraction, 2.3%, felt neutral about incorporating these strategies. Importantly, no participants selected the "Unlikely" or "Very Unlikely" options, indicating that there was no negative feedback on the applicability of the strategies learned. Overall, these results suggest that the event successfully provided valuable, practical tools that participants are eager to apply, reflecting a positive impact on their mental health awareness and daily practices.

➤ **Do you feel more confident in addressing your own mental health challenges after attending this event?**

Je, unajisikia kuwa na ujasiri zaidi katika kushughulikia changamoto zako za afya ya akili baada ya kuhudhuria tukio hili?

Do you feel more confident in addressing your own mental health challenges after attending this event?



The feedback from the event shows a strong positive impact on participants' confidence in addressing their mental health challenges. When asked, "Do you feel more confident in addressing your own mental health challenges after attending this event?" the majority of participants responded with "Yes / Ndiyo," indicating a boost in their confidence. A smaller portion of attendees were "Unsure / Sina uhakika," while importantly, no participants selected "No / Hapana," showing that there was no negative feedback. This clear absence of negative responses highlights the event's effectiveness in empowering individuals to feel more capable of managing their mental health.

➤ **Did this event help you better understand mental health challenges? If so, how?**

Je, tukio hili limekusaidia kuelewa vyema changamoto za afya ya akili? Ikiwa ndiyo, vipi?



The infographic highlights key themes from an event focused on autism and mental health. It shows that many participants learned about coping strategies, available support, and the unique qualities of autism. The event also helped attendees understand mental health better and connected them with others who share a commitment to reducing stigma around autism.

4. Budget Breakdown

| Expenditure | Detail | Cost (TZS) |
|----------------|--|------------|
| Venue | Rental of Nafasi Art Space for the final campaign event. This venue provided an ideal setting for hosting various workshops and activities related to the project. | 400,000 |
| T-Shirts (20) | Purchase and printing of T-shirts for event facilitators. These shirts served as uniforms, enhancing visibility and promoting the event. | 550,000 |
| Stage Banner | Creation of a banner for the stage, used to brand the event and increase its professional appearance. | 80,000 |
| Cupcakes (150) | Refreshments provided to attendees during the event, contributing to a welcoming atmosphere. | 85,000 |

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|--------------------|--|---------|
| Transport | Covering transportation costs for various project activities, including collecting materials, conducting workshops, visiting local NGOs, and facilitating improvements at the local autism center. | 300,000 |
| Art Canvas (4) | Large canvases used for interactive art sessions, allowing participants to engage creatively during the event. | 400,000 |
| Transaction Fees | Fees incurred during the withdrawal and processing of payments for various project expenses. | 54,297 |
| Acrylic Paint (10) | High-quality acrylic paints used in art activities, contributing to the success of the interactive art sessions. | 250,000 |
| Palettes | Art supplies used by participants during painting sessions, ensuring smooth and organized art creation. | 100,000 |
| Painting Brushes | Brushes provided to participants for use in the art activities, catering to different styles and techniques. | 80,000 |
| Snacks | Snacks provided by the SALT Foundation during the event, ensuring attendees were well-fed and comfortable. | 400,000 |
| Paper (Rim) | A rim of paper supplied for various activities, such as drawing, note-taking, and interactive sessions. | 20,000 |
| Glue Sticks (3) | Adhesive supplies used for various creative activities, enabling participants to complete art projects. | 12,000 |
| Paper Plates | Disposable plates provided for serving food during the event, ensuring hygiene and convenience. | 20,000 |
| Popcorn (2Kg) | Additional refreshments offered to attendees, contributing to a casual and enjoyable atmosphere. | 15,000 |
| Drinks | Beverages provided during the event to keep attendees hydrated and refreshed throughout the day. | 300,000 |
| Popcorn Bags | Packaging for popcorn, enhancing presentation and ease of distribution to attendees. | 8,000 |

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|------------------------|---|-----------|
| Photographer | Professional photography services to document the event, capturing key moments and providing material for future promotional use. | 85,000 |
| Solar Fitting | Installation costs for solar lighting systems at the local autism center, improving its infrastructure and sustainability. | 400,000 |
| Solar Lights (600W) | Purchase of 600-watt solar lights to create a more comfortable environment for light-sensitive individuals at the autism center. | 1,700,000 |
| Inclusion Club Funding | Financial support provided to the Inclusion Club, ensuring the sustainability of the project's mission and ongoing activities. | 500,000 |

5. Impact and Evaluation

The Beyond Stigma in Tanzania project has made significant strides in enhancing mental health awareness and support within the community. The installation of solar lights at the autism center has directly improved the daily experiences of children and staff by ensuring a stable and comfortable environment. The workshops conducted at Claritas International and Mbezi Garden Hotel have equipped workers with valuable knowledge on autism and mental health, fostering a more inclusive workplace. The Expressions of Hope event successfully engaged the community, raising funds and increasing understanding of mental health issues through interactive sessions and performances.

The establishment of Inclusion Clubs in schools marks a crucial step towards sustained mental health education and advocacy. Feedback from the Art for Mental Health Awareness event indicates a high level of participant satisfaction and a positive impact on their confidence and application of learned strategies. While challenges such as logistical issues and stigma persisted, the project's achievements reflect a substantial contribution to reducing mental health stigma and promoting acceptance. The partnerships and community engagement have laid a solid foundation for continued progress and advocacy in Tanzania, underscoring the project's success and the potential for long-term impact.

6. Challenges and Learnings

6.1 Challenges

The project faced several challenges, including logistical issues such as securing venues and coordinating with partners amidst limited resources and communication constraints typical of a

developing country context. Additionally, overcoming stigma and gaining support from the local community required significant perseverance and resilience. These challenges underscored the need for adaptability and a proactive approach to effectively advance the project's goals.

6.2 Key Learnings

The project provided valuable lessons in leadership and management, enhancing my ability to lead a diverse team and navigate complex logistical challenges. It highlighted the importance of cultural sensitivity in addressing mental health issues, as understanding and respecting local perceptions were essential for effective community engagement. Additionally, the project's success in overcoming numerous rejections underscored the critical role of perseverance and resilience in driving meaningful change. These experiences have significantly shaped my approach to leadership and project management.

7. Conclusion

The Beyond Stigma in Tanzania project has been a transformative journey, both personally and professionally. Drawing on the skills and experiences I gained at UWC Atlantic, I faced and overcame unique challenges in implementing this initiative in Tanzania. The project has successfully changed perceptions about mental health by engaging the community through workshops and educational sessions. The creation of the Inclusion Club and the successful Expressions of Hope event have established a strong foundation for ongoing mental health awareness and support in the country. These milestones are pivotal in supporting a broader movement towards mental health acceptance and advocacy in Tanzania. The partnerships formed with mental health Tanzania and the SALT Foundation, the engagement of various stakeholders, and the positive community response have all contributed to the project's success. As the project leader, I have grown in resilience, humility, and leadership, balancing the demands of this work with personal growth. I am committed to continuing this mission, ensuring that the progress made so far serves as a catalyst for lasting change in the mental health landscape of Tanzania.