



NIHR Global Health Research Group on Promoting Child and Adolescent Mental Wellbeing in sub-Saharan Africa

Project launch and Policy actor workshop report

Date: September 26, 2023

Venue: Bole Ambassador hotel, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Participants: Policy actor



The program started with registering 24 participants including the project staff. Participants from government offices such as, Ministry of Health and Child and Women’s Affairs and non-governmental offices such as WHO and local NGO working on child mental health, academicians and school directors has attended the meeting,

The program was opened at 9.30 am by Dr Mahlet Yared, the country co-lead for the project, with welcoming the participants, which was followed by Professor Atalay Alem, member of the project’s international advisory board, addressing on mental health research in Ethiopia and the role of stakeholders. He has also pointed out that this project aligns with the national interest in school based mental health interventions.

According to the schedule the following presentations were made:

1. Dr Tsion Hailu (country co-lead) has presented the overview of the study.
2. Dr Kibur Engdawork (WP1 lead for Ethiopia) has presented the findings from desk review and preliminary findings from policy actor’s interview.
3. Dr Eliase Sebsibe (WP2 lead for Ethiopia) presented about mindfulness practices, the importance of mindfulness in intervention,
4. Professor Pamela Abbott (PI) has presented the impact of whole school mindfulness intervention on child and adolescent’s mental health wellbeing and its relevance for policy actors.



The presentations were followed by discussions with the participants. Participants had suggestions and questions.

Suggestions:

- Highlighted the importance of mindfulness for decision makers
- Engaging ministry of education, teachers, parents in this project will be very important for the implementation
- Including existing school clubs in the project to maintain mindfulness practice beyond the project
- strongly advised to use digital platform to assist the mindfulness intervention

Questions raised by the participants:

- Criteria was for school section
- If outcome is measured for individual or the school as a whole
- Clarification on economic analysis
- How the project planned to address misconception about mindfulness
- Questions about development of mindfulness intervention
- Inclusion of children with special needs
- Why was critical realist method was chosen
- If the project has considered the current security issues in the country

The program was concluded by addressing the concerns and questions of the participants.

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