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Health and Care Research



NIHR Global Health Research Group on promoting children's and adolescent's mental wellbeing in sub-Saharan Africa Project Launch

Monday 3rd October 2022



Housekeeping

Today's launch is chaired by **Professor Agnes Binagwaho**, from the University of Global Health Equity, Rwanda.



Please keep your microphone muted. If your bandwidth is low, try turning off your camera.


There will be opportunities to ask questions after each presentation, and at a Q&A session towards the end of the launch.

In the meantime, please put any questions in the chat.



Agenda

Agenda

- 1. Welcome to Project Launch** by Professor Agnes Binagwaho, University of Global Health Equity
 - 2. Opening Remarks** by Professor Pete Edwards, the Vice-Principal of Regional Engagement and Regional Recovery, University of Aberdeen
 - 3. Overview of the Project** by Professor Pamela Abbott, University of Aberdeen
 - 4. Introduction to Mindfulness** by Professor Graeme Nixon, University of Aberdeen
 - 5. Overview of child and adolescent education in sub-Saharan Africa** by Professor Wenceslas Nzabwirwa, University of Rwanda
 - 6. Break**
 - 7. Overview of mental wellbeing in sub-Saharan Africa** by Dr Tsion Hailu, Addis Ababa University
 - 8. Q&A** with Professors Agnes Binagwaho, Pamela Abbott, Graeme Nixon, Wenceslas Nzabwirwa and Dr Tsion Hailu
 - 9. Closing Remarks** by Professor Agnes Binagwaho, University of Global Health Equity
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ABERDEEN 2040

Opening Remarks

Professor Pete Edwards, Vice-Principal of Regional Engagement and Regional Recovery, University of Aberdeen, UK



ABERDEEN 2040

Project Overview

Professor Pamela Abbott, Director
of the Centre for Global
Development, University of
Aberdeen, UK



The Research Consortium



With £2.88 million in funding from the NIHR, the University of Aberdeen, Addis Ababa University, the University of Global Health Equity, and the University of Rwanda have formed a research consortium.

Between **August 2022 and July 2026** we will be working together to research a mindfulness intervention to promote children and adolescent mental wellbeing in sub-Saharan Africa. The project will be delivered in Rwanda and Ethiopia and benefit around 10,000 children.



Context

Children and adolescent mental wellbeing is an under-researched issue in sub-Saharan Africa, making our project critically important.

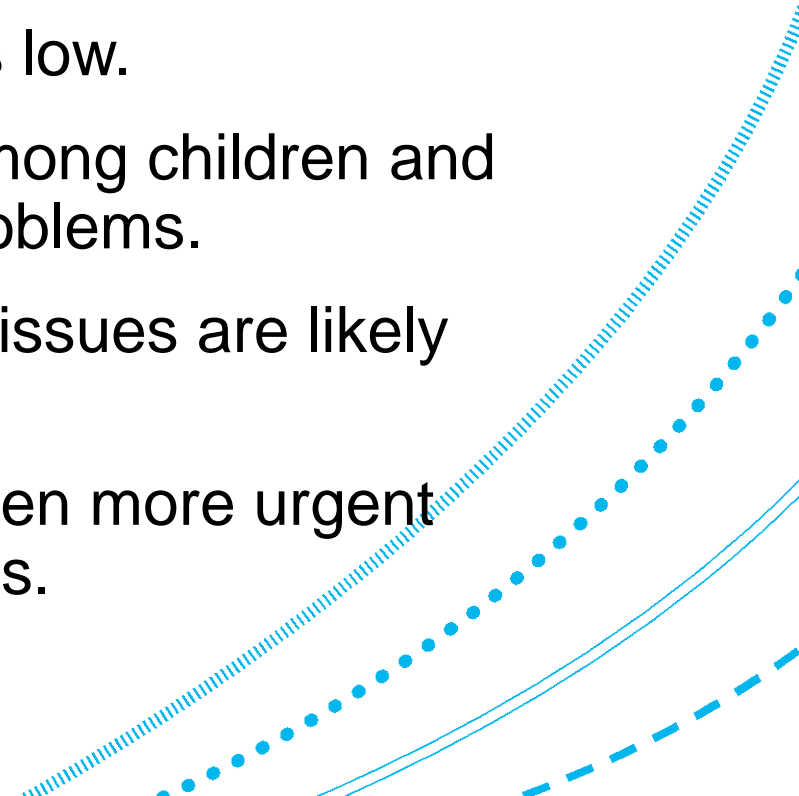
There is a lack of community awareness and few interventions to promote wellbeing.

In SSA, child wellbeing is poor and school attainment is low.

Mental health issues are the leading cause of illness among children and adolescents , with about 1 in 7 having mental health problems.

Children and adolescents with untreated mental health issues are likely to have poor mental health as adults.

COVID-19 has impacted mental wellbeing, making it even more urgent to find acceptable, affordable, and effective interventions.

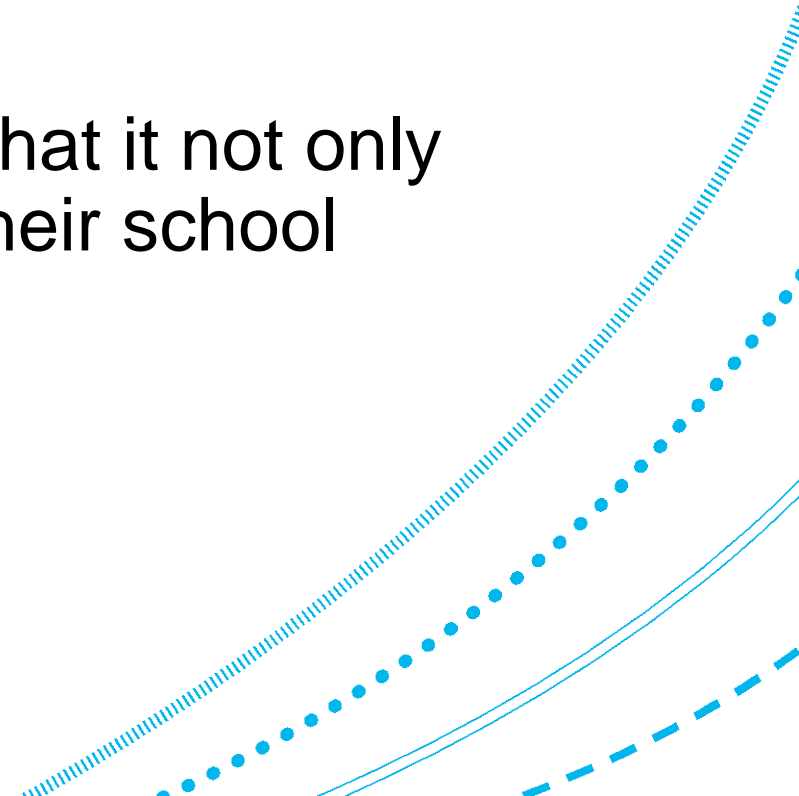




Our Aim

Our overall aim is to develop, implement, and evaluate an affordable, effective, and trusted whole school mindfulness intervention to improve the mental well-being of children and adolescents in Rwanda and Ethiopia.

The benefits of the mindfulness intervention is that it not only improves children's mental wellbeing but also their school performance.





Our Team

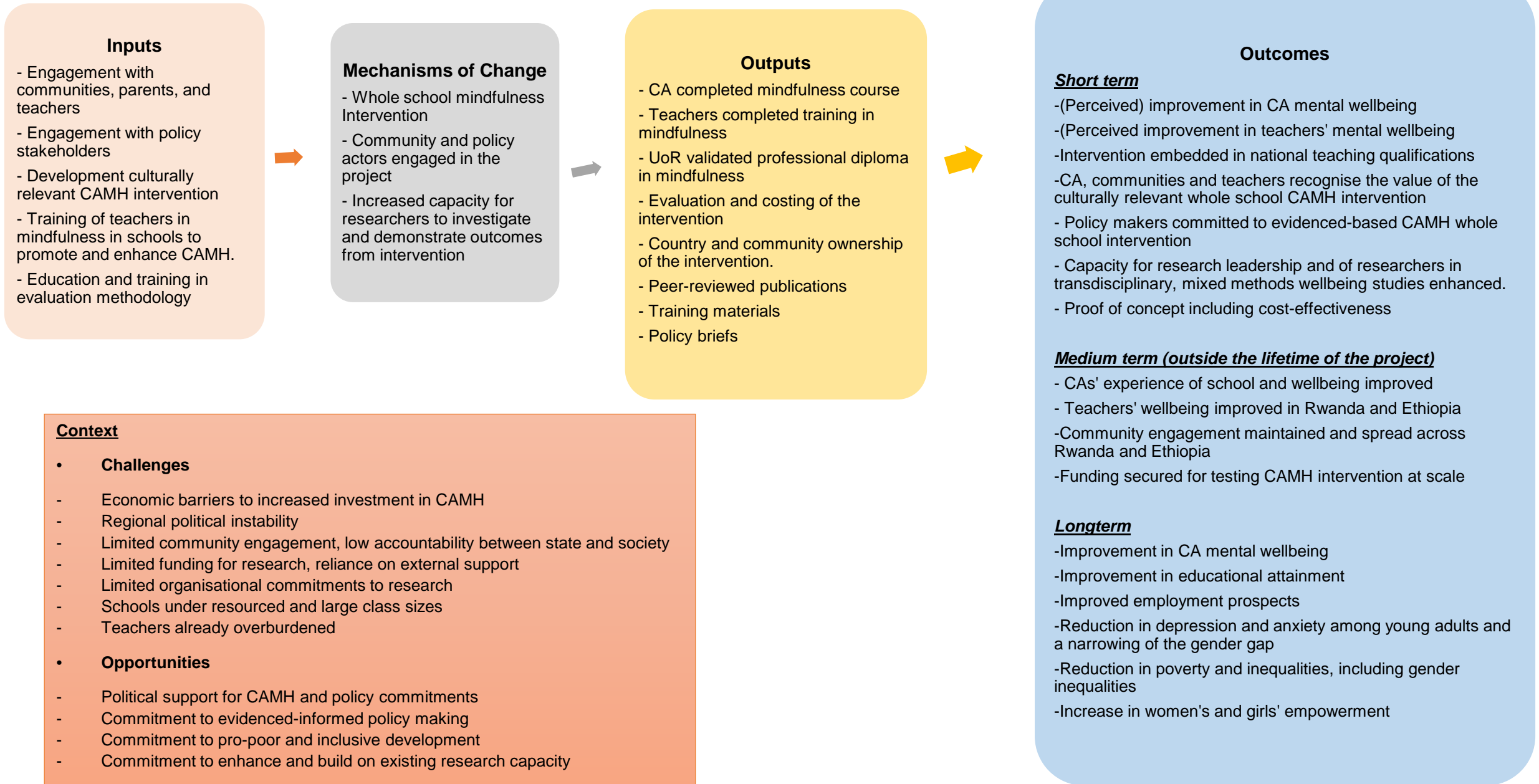
Our team is made up of researchers from Ethiopia, Rwanda, and the UK. They include health experts, psychiatrists, social scientists, Economists, gender experts, and teacher educators.

We have an International Advisory Board, including government officials from both countries and world-leading experts on wellbeing, education and mindfulness.

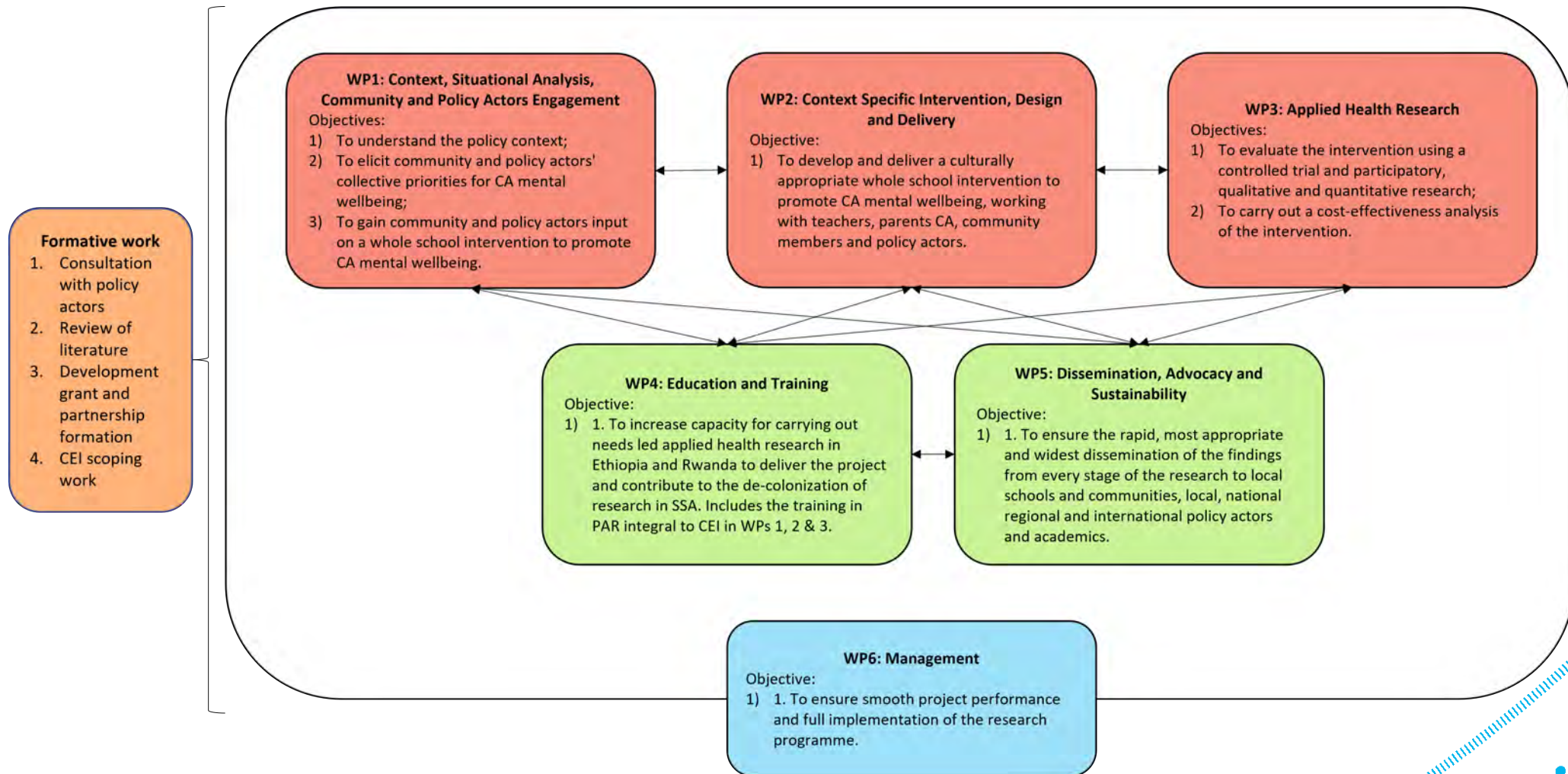
We recognise people are the experts on their own lives. Community members, including parents, teachers, children, and adolescents, will help us co-design the mindfulness intervention.



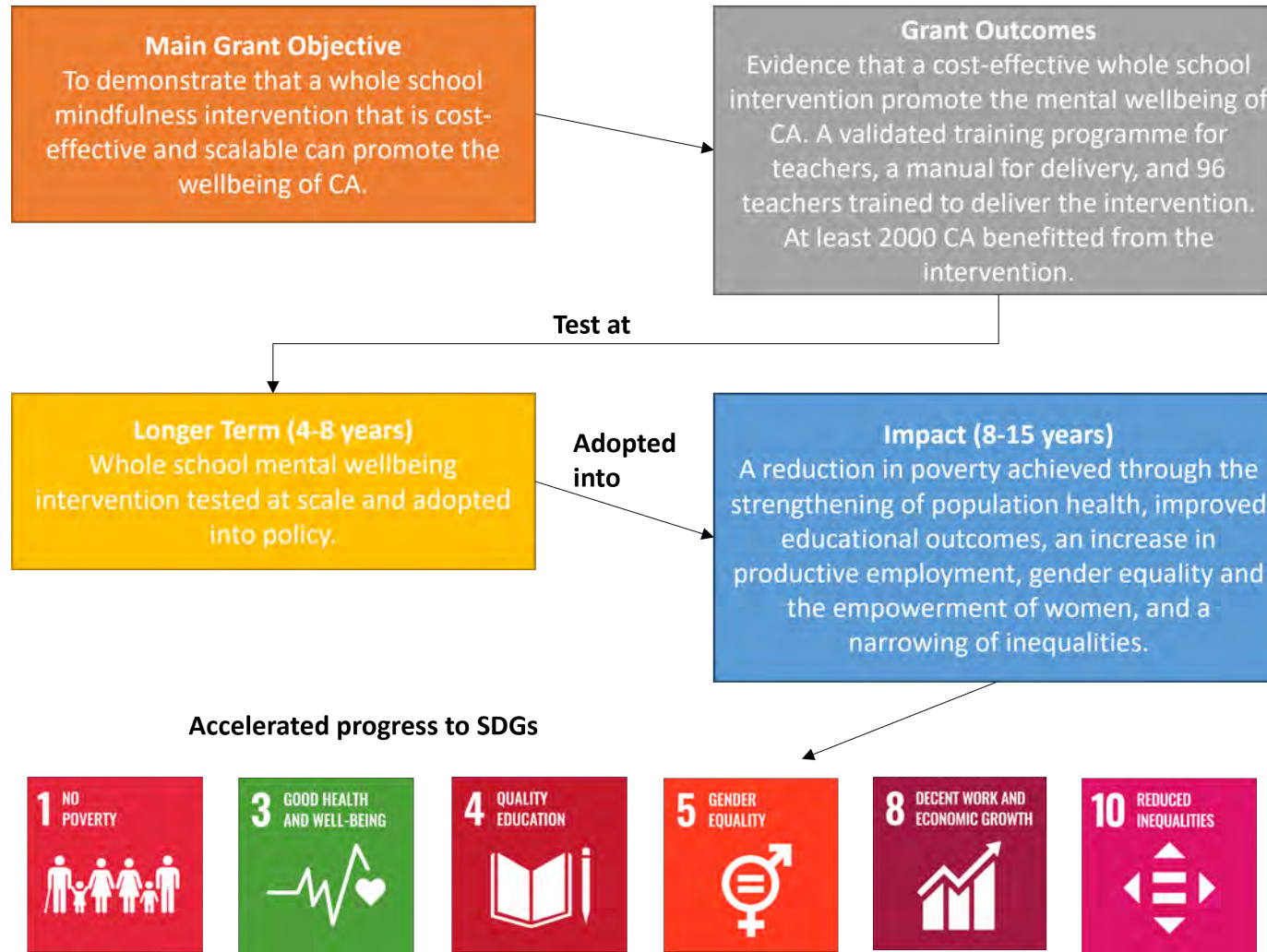
Theory of Change



Overview of the Work Packages



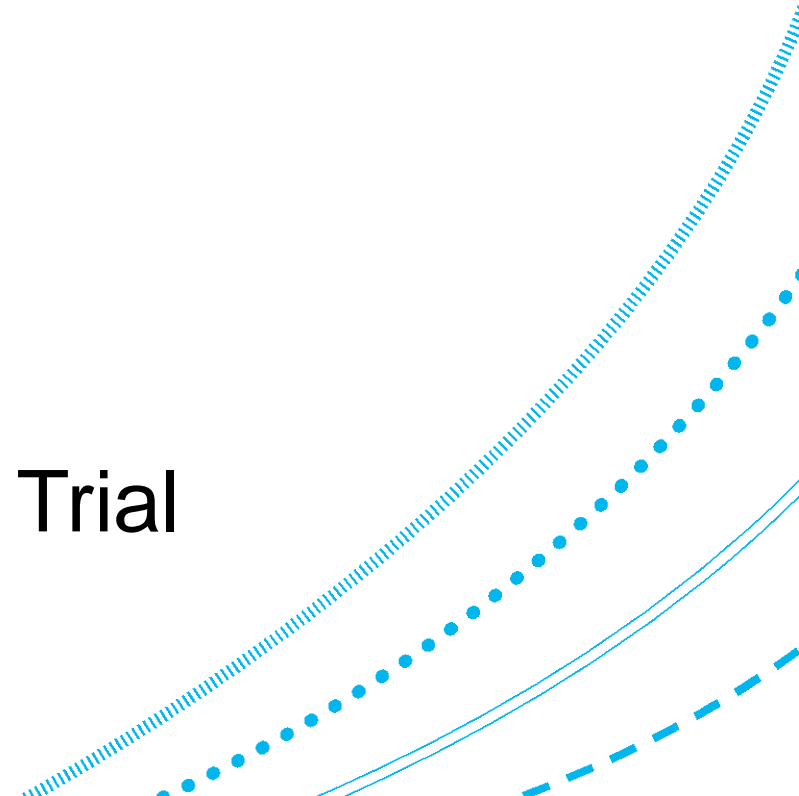
Impact





Innovation

- Community Engagement and Involvement
- Transdisciplinary
- Gender Transformative
- Critical Realist Informed Cluster Control Trial





Questions

Do you have any questions about the 'Project Overview'?

Please raise your hand by selecting 'raise your hand' from the 'Reactions' 🙋 tab at the top of the screen, or post your question in the chat.



1495



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CELEBRATING
525 YEARS
1495 – 2020

ABERDEEN 2040

Introduction to Mindfulness

Professor Graeme Nixon,
University of Aberdeen, UK

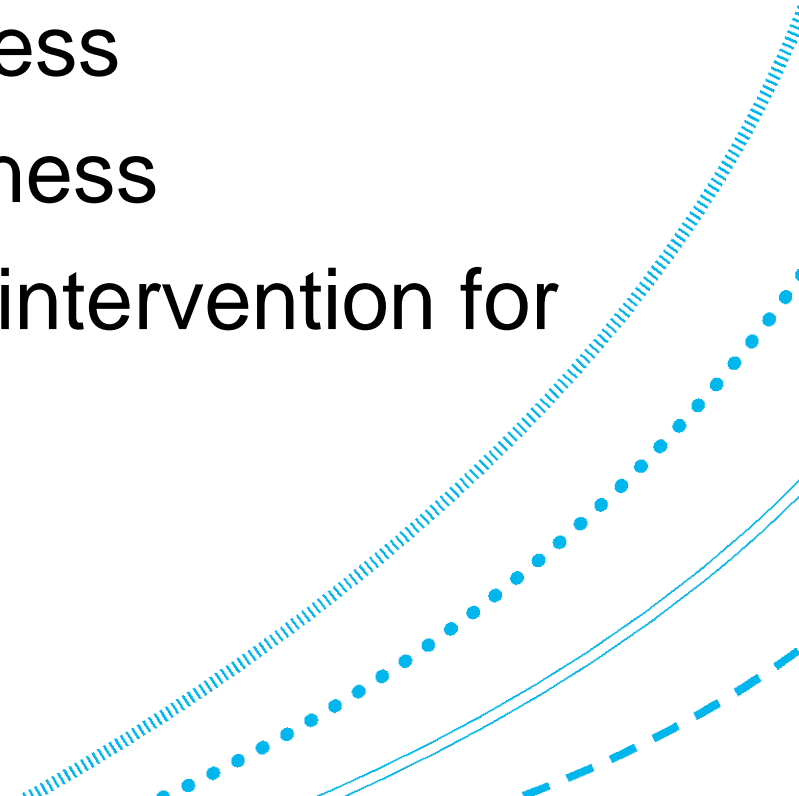




Work Package 2

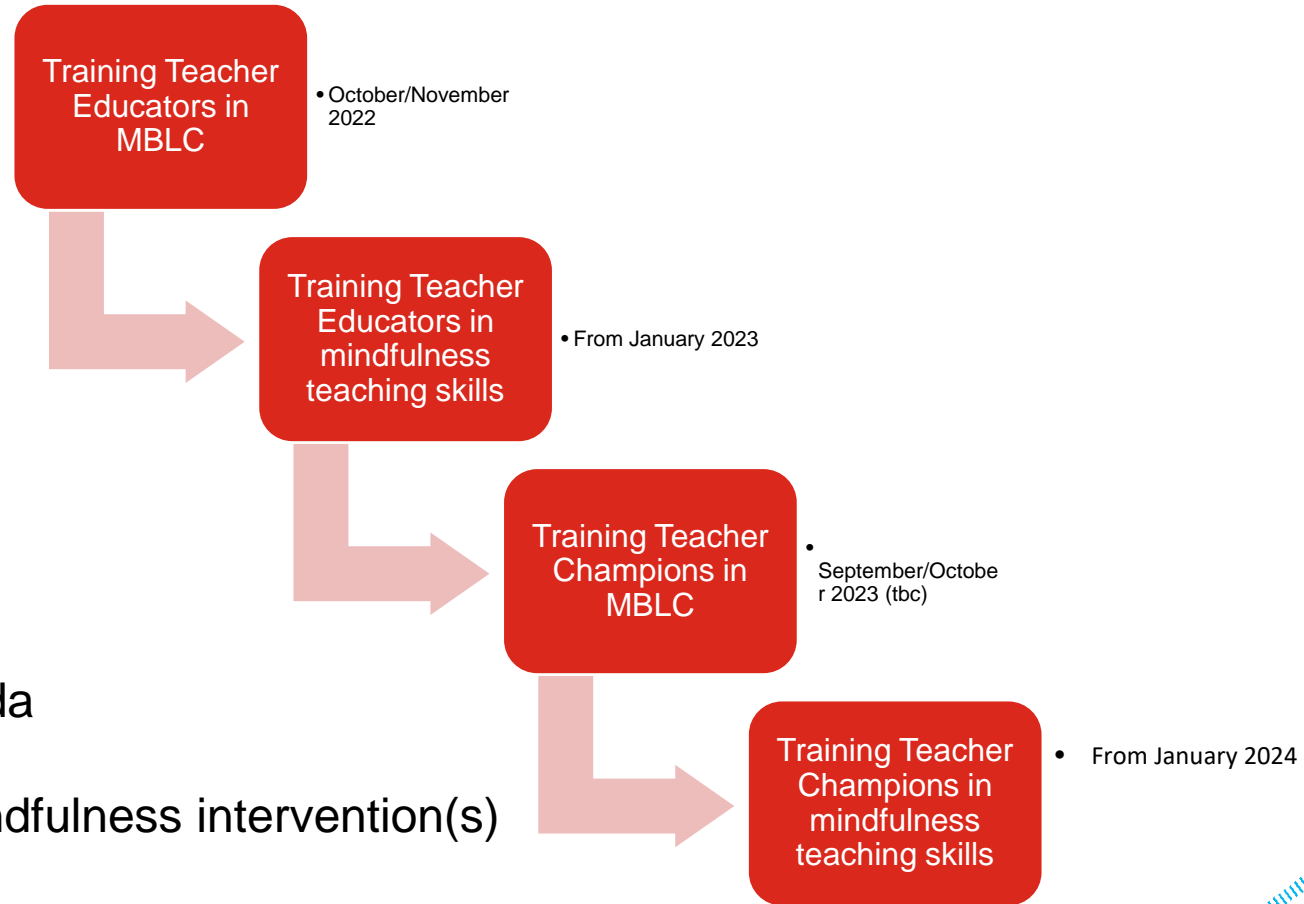
Key Tasks

1. Systematic reviews
2. Training teacher educators in mindfulness
3. Training teacher champions in mindfulness
4. Developing a appropriate mindfulness intervention for Rwandan and Ethiopian schools





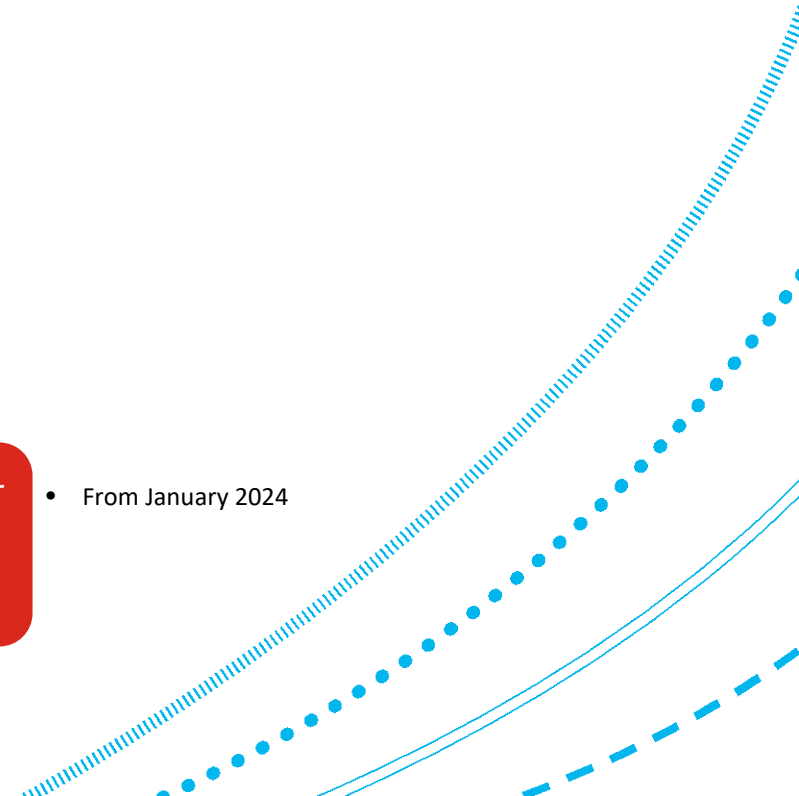
The years ahead



September 2023

Mindfulness Workshop in Rwanda

From year 2 – co-creation of mindfulness intervention(s)





An Introduction to Mindfulness

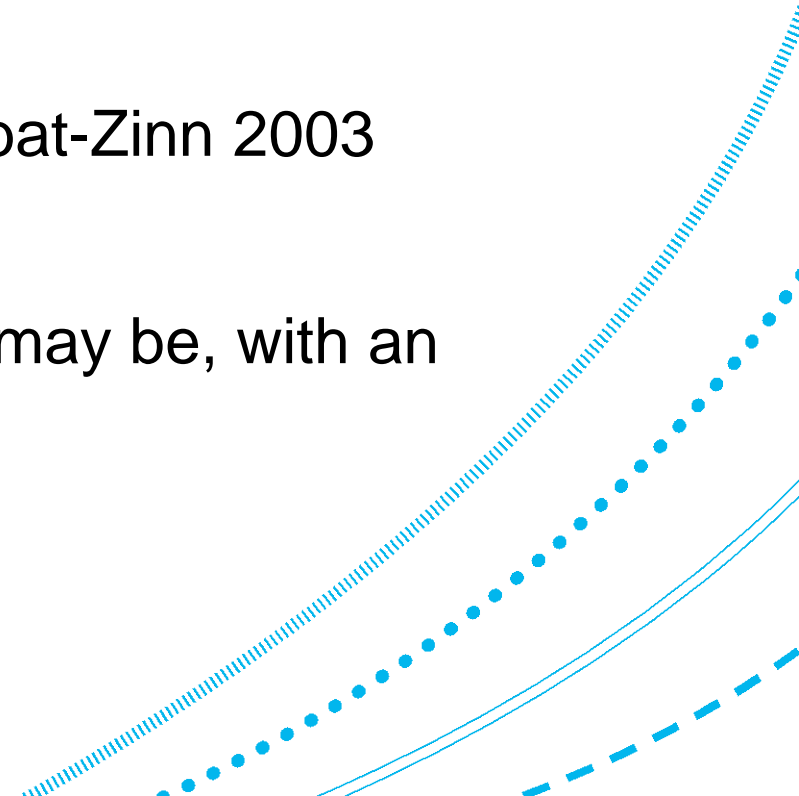
“Mindfulness is the awareness that emerges through paying attention in a particular way...

On purpose

In the present moment

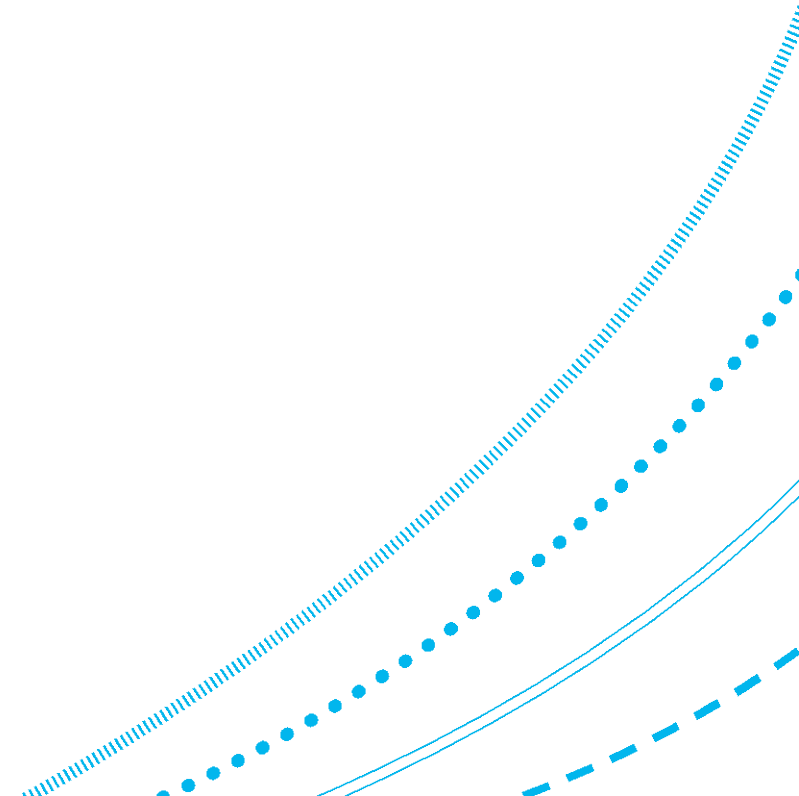
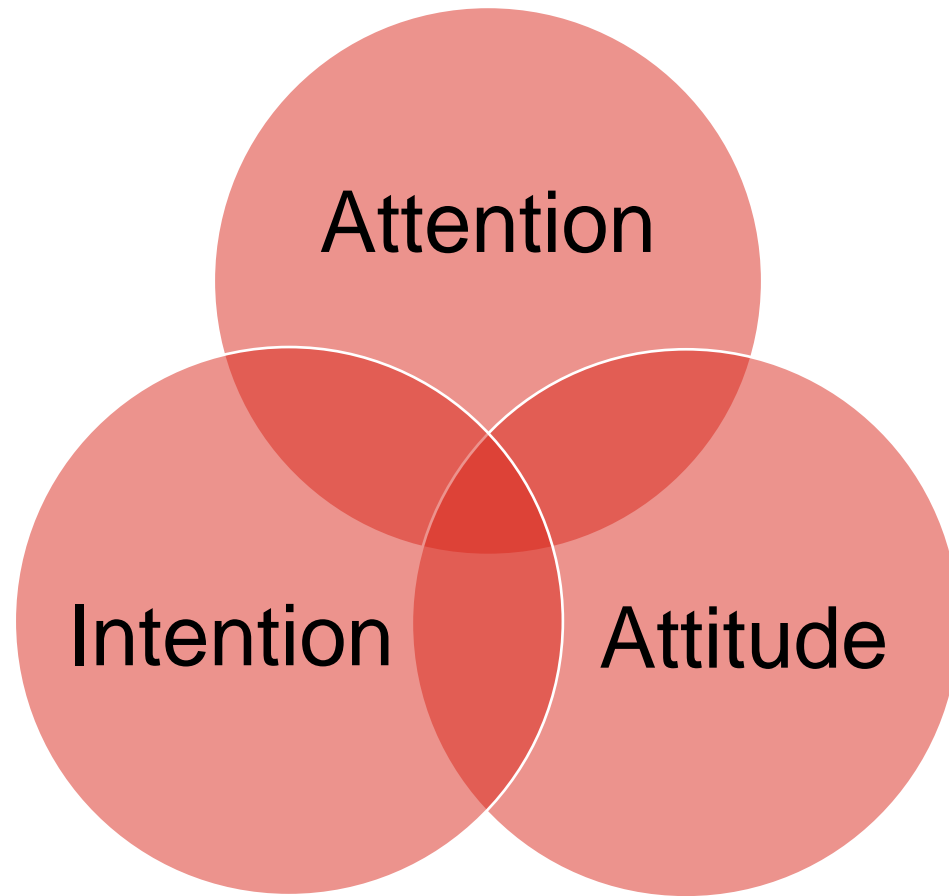
To the unfolding of experience moment by moment” Kabat-Zinn 2003

Observing our thoughts and sensations, whatever they may be, with an attitude of kindness and curiosity





Three aspects of mindfulness

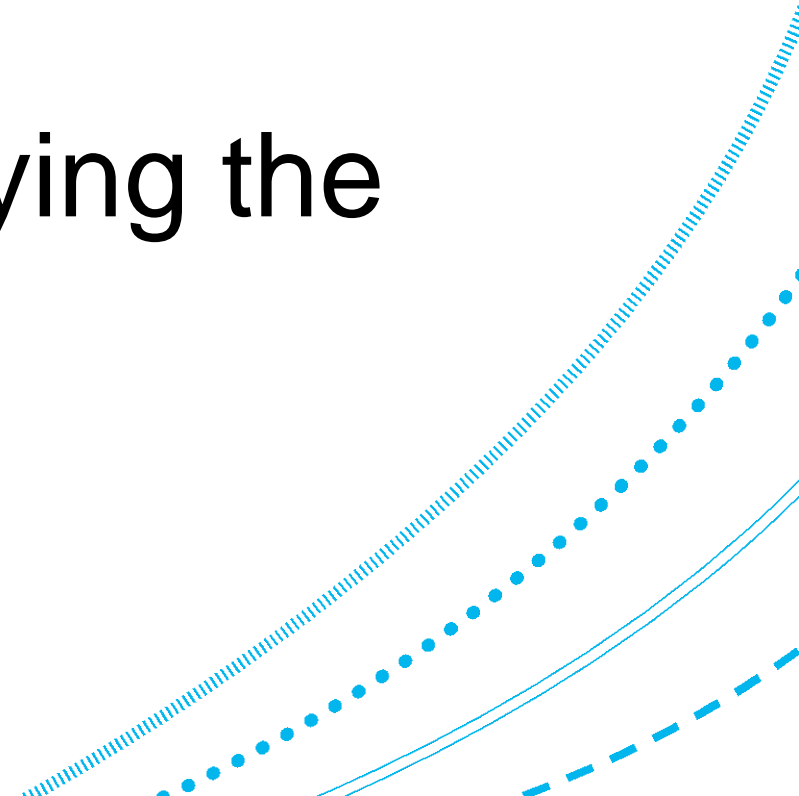




What mindfulness is not

Religious

Stopping thought or emptying the
mind





Applications in Multiple Contexts

Healthcare

Education

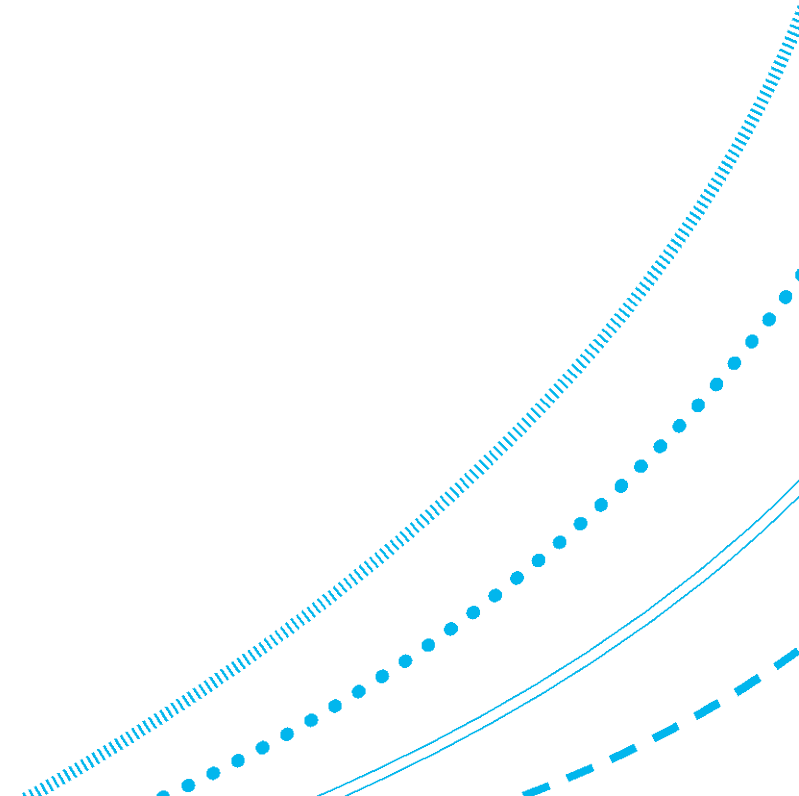
Creativity

Sport

Social Work

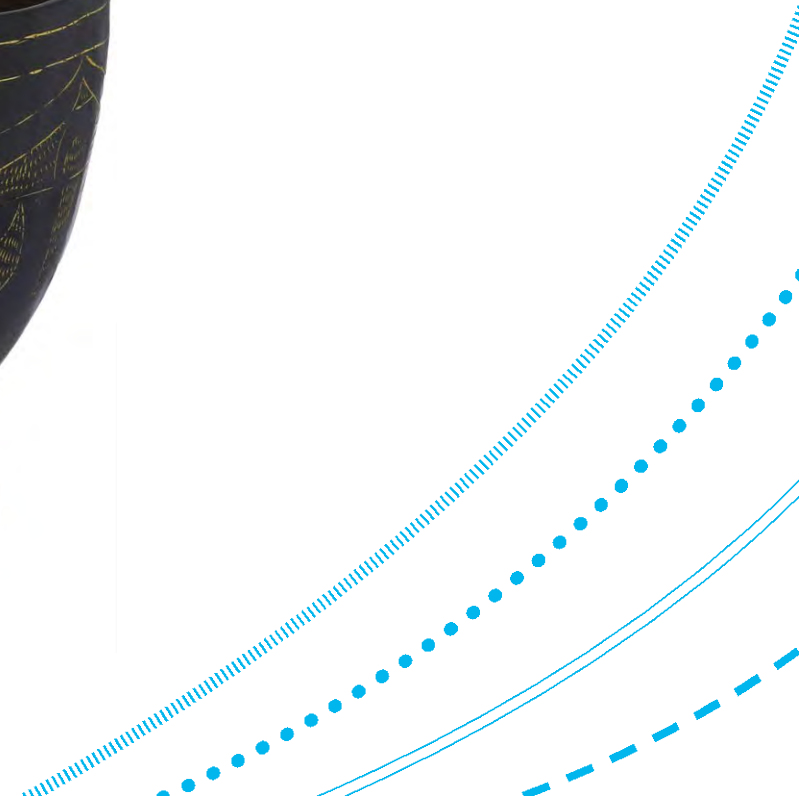
Prison Service

Business





A mindfulness practice

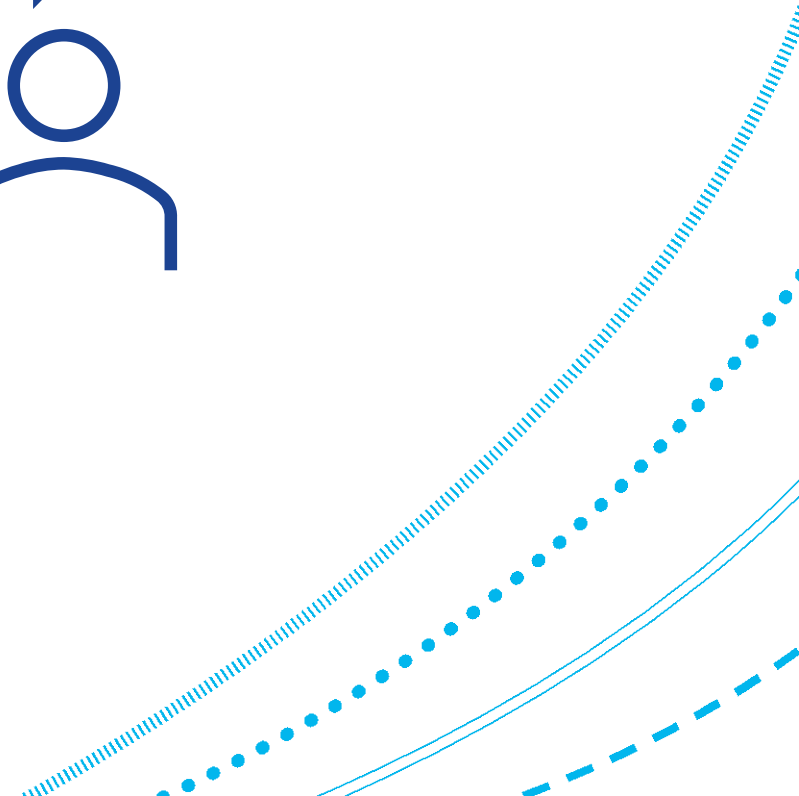




Questions

Do you have any questions about an 'Introduction to Mindfulness?'

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RWANDA

An overview of child and adolescent education in sub-Saharan Africa

Professor Wenceslas Nzabairwa,
College of Education, University of
Rwanda





Overview of child and adolescent education in sub-Saharan Africa

NIHR Project Launch
BY

Prof. Wenceslas Nzabairwa (PhD)
University of Rwanda-College of Education (UR-CE)



Outline

- The power of education
- The right to education in SSA
- Primary school children contextualized data
- Challenges facing primary school children in SSA
- Education for health and wellbeing
- Mindfulness: framework for promoting child mental wellbeing in school context
- Evidence for mindfulness
- Mindful teachers make difference
- References



The power of education

EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON WHICH YOU CAN USE TO CHANGE THE WORLD - NELSON MANDELA



www.pxleyes.com

The right to education

- ***“Everyone has the right to education,”*** Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- All Children and Adolescents (CA) have a right to enjoy their childhood as well as being able to attain their full potential and lead productive adult lives (WHO Secretariat, 2012).
- **SDG Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**
- Accelerate progress towards achieving the SDGs, including SDG 3 (health); SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (economic development & employment), SDG 10 (inequalities) and SDG 1 (poverty)



Primary school children contextualized data

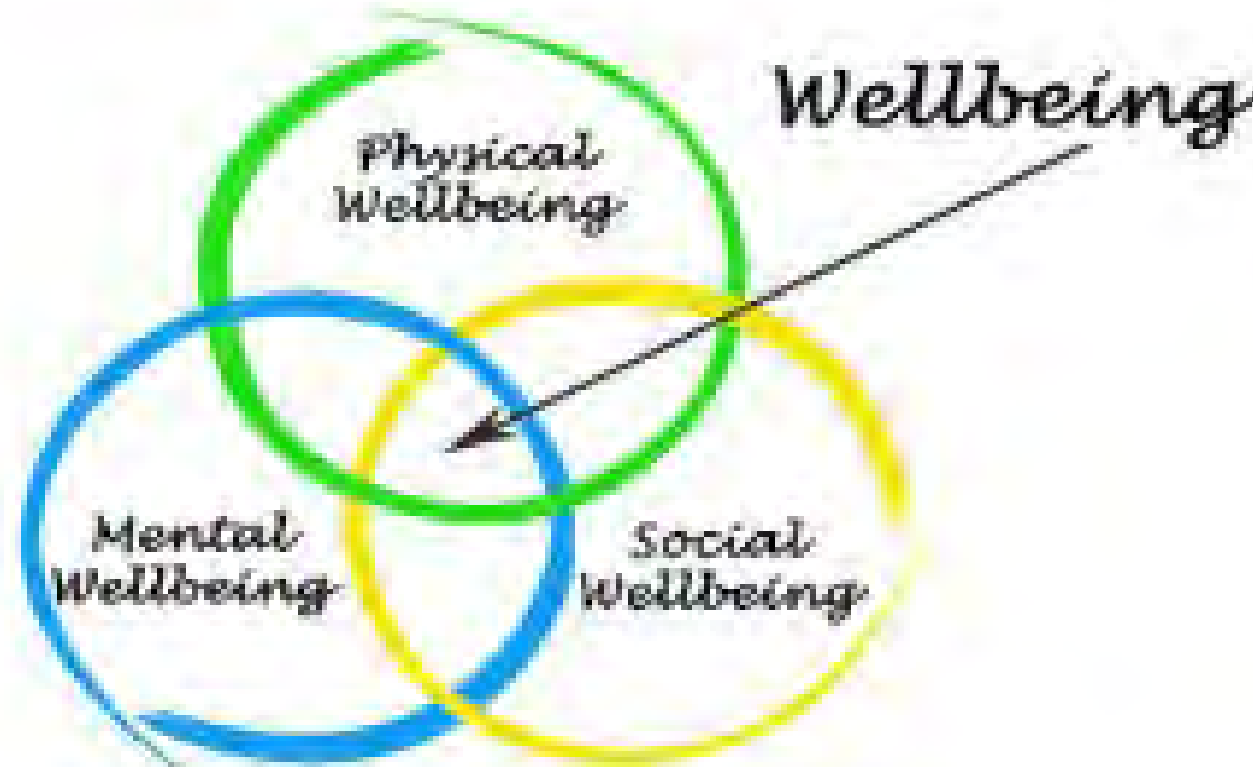
Indicators	Ethiopia	Rwanda	Source
Children living in high poverty in 2017 (less than \$1.95ppp a day)	26%	60%	Silwal, A. R. et al. (2020)
(i) Compulsory primary school education	7-15 years	7-13 years	Trines, S. (2019) and Mekonnen, H. et al. (2020)
(ii) Low completion rates and over- age	√	√	“
(iii) Low academic performance of children with mental health	√	√	“
Primary net enrolment rate	99.9% (in 2018)	98.3% (in 2018) 98.9% (in 2021)	USAID (2018) and MINEDUC (2022)
Pupil : teacher ratio	≥ 50 children	≥ 50 children	Classroom data



Challenges facing primary school children in SSA

- 72 million children out of primary school, with 50% living in SSA
 - About 130 million children of primary school age in SSA without basic literacy and numeracy skills
 - Poverty factors of increases in out-of-school and dropout rates are: health issues, unemployment and illiterate parents
 - Other factors are: lack of financial resources needed for schooling materials, creating schools and recruiting and training teachers
- ✓ ***Girls reveal to be the ones majorly disadvantaged by non-schooling***

Education for health and well-being



“Education and health care significantly influence well-being and health outcomes, especially throughout adolescence”
(UNESCO, 2016 & 2022)

03/10/2022

NIHR Project launch



Mindfulness: framework for promoting child mental wellbeing in school context

Four key aspects to our wellbeing:

COPE - CONNECT - FLOURISH - EMPOWER CHANGE

For all of us in education mindfulness can help:

- **cope** with the pressures and uncertainties of life and work,
- **connect** with people and places,
- **flourish** through appreciating ourselves, others and the world around us, and
- provide the perspective and vision to **empower us to change** what isn't working for us.

(Estyn, 2019)



Evidence for mindfulness: impact on the wellbeing and performance of the school staff (Katherine Weare, 2014)

Increased:

Wellbeing

Mindfulness

Self-compassion

Sustained attention

Emotional regulation

Teaching efficacy

Decreased:

Stress

Anxiety

Depression

Demotivation

Time-urgency

Burnout symptoms

Mindful teachers make difference



Some references

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- Mekonnen, H. et al. (2020). Impact of Child Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties on Educational Outcomes of Primary School Children in Ethiopia: A Population-Based Cohort Study. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health*, 14(22). Retrieved from <https://capmh.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13034-020-00326-6>
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***Thank you for your kind
attention***



Questions

Do you have any questions about an 'An overview of child and adolescent education in sub-Saharan Africa'?

Please raise your hand by selecting 'raise your hand' from the 'Reactions' 🙋 tab at the top of the screen, or post your question in the chat.





**Break – please
return in 10 minutes**



Overview of mental wellbeing in sub-Saharan Africa

Dr Tsion Hailu (M.D), Psychiatrist,
Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia





Child and Adolescent Mental Health in Sub-Saharan Africa

Tsion Hailu (M.D)

Psychiatrist



Introduction

- Child and adolescent make up a quarter of the world's population
- 85% of them live in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)



Introduction...

- CA mental wellbeing is an under-researched issue in SSA and LMICs generally (Mbwayo, A. et al 2021)
- There is limited reliable data
 - On the prevalence and risk factors for mental illness
 - Or evidence on what works to promote mental wellbeing and
 - What strategies are most cost-effective



Evidence on Child and Adolescent Mental Health

- Globally, mental disorders are the leading cause of disability in young people (WHO, 2020).
- About 20% of individuals experience mental health problems during their lifetime.
- 50% of adults with mental health issues first experienced them before they were 14 years old.



Evidence...

- The burden is higher in SSA (Orth, Z., & Wyk, B. van. 2020)
- In SSA (Cortina, M. et. al 2012, March 5)
 - 1 in 7 CA having mental health issues.
 - 1 in 10 (9.5%) having a specific psychiatric disorder.



Evidence ...

- In Rwanda, the national mental health survey found a
 - Prevalence rate for mental disorders among those aged 14-18 of 10%
- The depression rate in HIV-positive and HIV-Affected CA is also higher
- 48% among teenage mothers.
- In Ethiopia, the CA prevalence rate was estimated to be between 12% and 25% in 2012 (NMHS, 2019)



Consequences



- Critical age for mental health
- Poor mental wellbeing among CA is associated with:
 - Lower school attendance and academic performance
 - Increased involvement in risky behaviours
 - Mental health problems persisting into adult life
 - Poorer quality of life.



Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service



There is wide treatment gap

(Atilola.O. 2014, Batunde, G. B et.al , 2019, Sankah, O. et al. 2018)



Challenges



- Lack of a clear plan for promoting CA mental wellbeing
- Low domestic spending and doners funding
- Lack of available, accessible, acceptable, and quality services
- Shortage of qualified professionals
 - Rwanda has no child psychiatrists or specialist facilities for MH,
 - Ethiopia has 2 child psychiatrists and 2 specialist facilities.



Challenges...



- Lack of knowledge of health-seeking behaviour
- Stigma
- A preference for seeking help from traditional and religious leaders



Conclusion



- There is an urgent need to promote the mental wellbeing of CA in LICs
- It should be culturally relevant and acceptable and sustainable



Thank you!



Questions

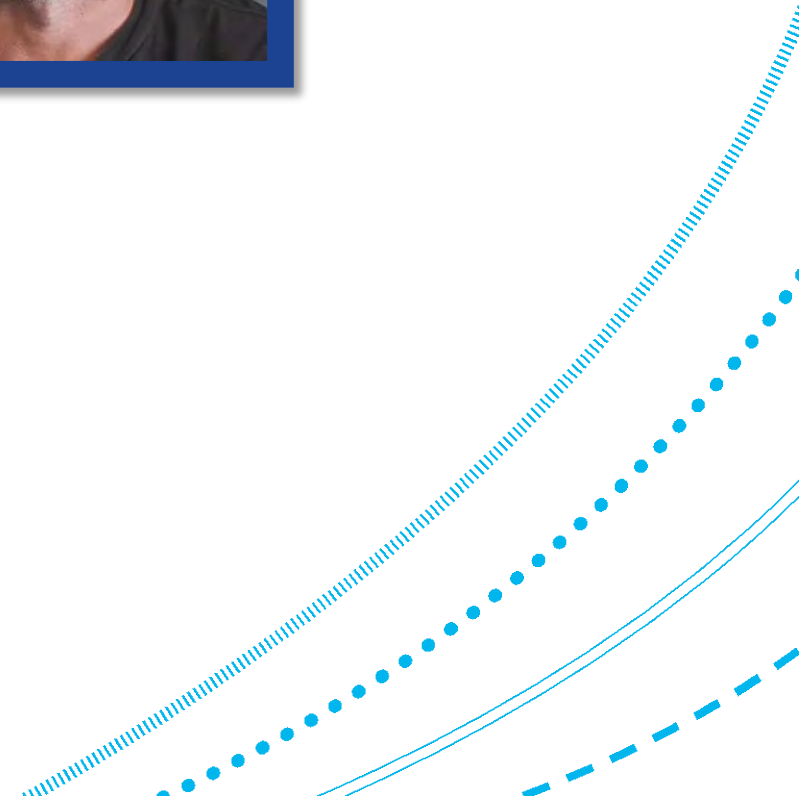
Do you have any questions about an 'Overview of mental wellbeing in sub-Saharan Africa'?

Please raise your hand by selecting 'raise your hand' from the 'Reactions' 🙋 tab at the top of the screen, or post your question in the chat.





Q&A



Closing Remarks

Professor Agnes Binagwaho,
University of Global Health Equity,
Rwanda





Thank you!

Thank you for attending today's launch and we hope you found it interesting and informative.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the NIHR for their generous funding. This project is funded by the NIHR Global Health Research Programme (NIHR133712). The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the NIHR or the Department of Health and Social Care.

If you have any feedback or questions about today, please email nihrcmw@abdn.ac.uk

