

StrongMinds Report Details Work Treating Depression in African Prisons

Group therapy may be a key to reducing recidivism

KAMPALA, UGANDA, July 15, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- StrongMinds, a global non-profit that treats depression using layperson-led interpersonal group therapy (IPT-G), has released a new report titled "[Hope and Dignity Behind Bars: Expanding Mental Healthcare Access in Prisons in Uganda and Kenya](#)."

“Treating depression can help address key issues inside prisons, such as suicide, violence, and even overcrowding.”

Sean Mayberry

The report shares insights from its groundbreaking program providing mental health care to incarcerated individuals in Uganda. It outlines the therapy approach, observed outcomes, implementation challenges, and includes personal stories from program participants. The report also previews a new program recently launched in a Kenyan prison.

“This report demonstrates that everyone can benefit from receiving treatment for their depression—regardless of where they are or what they may have done,” said StrongMinds CEO Sean Mayberry. “We also show that with a low-cost model like ours, treating depression can help address key issues inside prisons, such as suicide, violence, and even overcrowding.”

StrongMinds began working with the Uganda Prison Service in 2023 to train inmates as group therapy facilitators. The therapy model addresses four key triggers of depression—life change, unresolved conflict, grief, and isolation—all of which are common experiences among incarcerated individuals. Since the program’s inception, it has reached more than 14,000 clients, all of whom have shown sharp declines in their depression scores as measured by StrongMinds.

“The program has obvious benefits for clients, helping them survive an incredibly difficult time and giving them tools to reconcile with others and rebuild their lives after release,” added Mayberry. “But the program also benefits those who work in prisons. Therapy reduces conflict, which lowers the risk of violence. And with lower rates of recidivism, prisons become less crowded and safer for both staff and inmates.”

Some participants have even gained the confidence and inspiration to file appeals. In certain cases, judges have reduced sentences after learning about an individual’s participation in

therapy. Inmate facilitators also receive stipends from StrongMinds, allowing them to support their families or save for life after incarceration.

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About StrongMinds

Founded in 2013, StrongMinds treats depression in women and adolescents in sub-Saharan Africa. Our evidence-based group talk therapy model, based on interpersonal group therapy (IPT-G), is delivered by trained lay community members, enabling us to reach tens of thousands of people each year. For more information, please visit strongminds.org.

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