



MENTAL HEALTH
FOR YOUTH INITIATIVE

COMPANY PROFILE

Founded on the belief that mental well-being is fundamental to individual potential and collective progress, we work at the intersection of mental health education, psychosocial support, creative expression, research and advocacy, climate resilience, and youth leadership development.

JAN
2026

PREPARED BY
Smartchimp Studios

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PREPARED FOR
MHYI

FOUNDER'S NOTE

Empowering *Young Minds*. Transforming *Futures*.

I grew up with unresolved emotional trauma, but I had no language for it. I didn't know what mental health was, or that information and support existed. What could have been addressed with the right knowledge instead lingered silently, shaping my choices, relationships, and confidence without my awareness.

Through research, I came to understand that many of these challenges were not random. They were deeply connected to powerful social determinants: gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights, substance abuse, and climate-related stress....



Years later, as a youth development researcher and lecturer, I saw the same pattern in my students. Brilliant young people with varying mental health challenges could not name what they were going through. Misinformation made it hard to understand. Stigma made it hard to talk. But the impact on their lives, on learning, relationships, and hope, was undeniable.



Cont.d

FOUNDER'S NOTE

Empowering *Young Minds*. Transforming *Futures*.

MHYI was created to focus deliberately on these four drivers, because they shape the mental health and futures of young people every day.

Since 2019, we have reached over 300,000 young people across Nigeria in schools, communities, IDP camps, orphanages, and PWD communities with trauma-informed, evidence-based mental health awareness and support. The Nigerian government has recognised our educational resources, and our partnerships with the Federal Ministry of Youth Development, the Federal Ministry of Health, and NYSC position us as co-architects of youth mental health infrastructure, not just service providers.

Our vision is pan-African. We are working to institutionalise youth mental health within ECOWAS, the African Union, and Commonwealth frameworks, because mental well-being is core infrastructure for employability, leadership, civic engagement, and democratic resilience. No country can unlock its demographic dividend while neglecting the psychological health of its youth.

We invite government, private sector, educators, faith institutions, and youth leaders to co-design and reform the systems that failed my generation and are failing theirs.

Millions of young people are paying the price of our silence. It's time to build differently.

Lucy Enangha Abeng

Founder & Executive Director

Mental Health for Youth Initiative (MHYI)



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MENTAL HEALTH
FOR YOUTH INITIATIVE



MENTAL HEALTH
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ABOUT US

Empowering Young Minds. Transforming Futures.

We exist to ensure that young people are seen, heard, and supported in their mental and emotional well-being. We believe that mental health is not a privilege, but a fundamental part of a young person's ability to learn, grow, and thrive. Through youth-led action, community engagement, and compassionate support, MHYI works to break stigma, build understanding, and create pathways for young people to heal, develop resilience, and reach their full potential.

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01



TRACK

Advancing Mental Health Awareness, Support, and Systems Change

Mental Health for Youth Initiative (MHYI) is a **Pan-African, youth-led non-profit organisation** dedicated to promoting youth mental health awareness, improving access to quality care, and driving evidence-based policy advocacy.

MHYI operates as a youth-centred mental health organisation, **prioritising young people aged 14–29 in Nigeria and across selected African countries**. We build bridges between awareness, support, and systems change, using community-based programmes, digital platforms, and national partnerships to scale impact.

LEGAL STATUS

Mental Health for Youth Initiative (MHYI), with registration number, CAC/IT/NO 141413 was founded in October of 2019 and registered under Section 590 of the Companies and Allied Mat-ters Act, (CAMA) on the 27th of December 2019.





OUR VALUES

Advancing Mental Health Awareness, Support, and Systems Change

Compassion – We operate with empathy and understanding, placing humanity at the centre of our interventions.

Inclusivity – We ensure equitable access to mental-health knowledge and care, prioritising marginalised and underserved groups, including Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), out-of-school youth, and orphaned children.

Excellence – We pursue the highest standards in all our work, ensuring quality, precision, and impact in every programme, partnership, and decision we make.

Continuous Learning – We embrace a learning culture that values data, reflection, and adaptation, using insights from programmes, partners, and youth to strengthen impact and evolve our strategies.

Integrity – We uphold transparency, accountability, and credibility in all actions and partnerships.

Sustainability – We design initiatives that create lasting impact, embedding resilience into systems and communities

OUR MISSION

To advance mental health awareness, deliver accessible, high-quality support services, and catalyse systems and partnerships that enable young people to lead healthy, fulfilled, and impactful lives.

OUR VISION

A future where young people are mentally empowered, resilient, and fully supported to thrive.





TARGET BENEFICIARIES

Persona Scope



Students

Secondary schools
and Tertiary Institutions



Out Of School

Out-of-school youth and
young workers



Displaced

Young people living in
informal settlements and
climate-affected areas



Young Girls

Adolescent girls and
young women at risk of
GBV and SRHR violations



Drug Addicts

Youth who use or are at
risk of substance abuse



Troubled

Youth with lived
experience of mental
health challenges

Secondary Beneficiaries

include parents, teachers, community leaders, and service providers who interact with young people daily.



3

GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



4

QUALITY
EDUCATION



5

GENDER
EQUALITY



10

REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



8

DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



13

CLIMATE
ACTION





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THE CHALLENGE

The Young, The hustle, The Mind

Young people across Africa are navigating complex and rapidly changing environments shaped by poverty, violence, climate stress, limited educational opportunities, and structural inequities. These conditions heighten vulnerability to mental health challenges, yet access to care remains extremely limited.

Despite the urgency, youth mental health remains one of the most underfunded and underprioritized areas of public health in Africa, with limited awareness, limited professional support, and a gap in systemic support.

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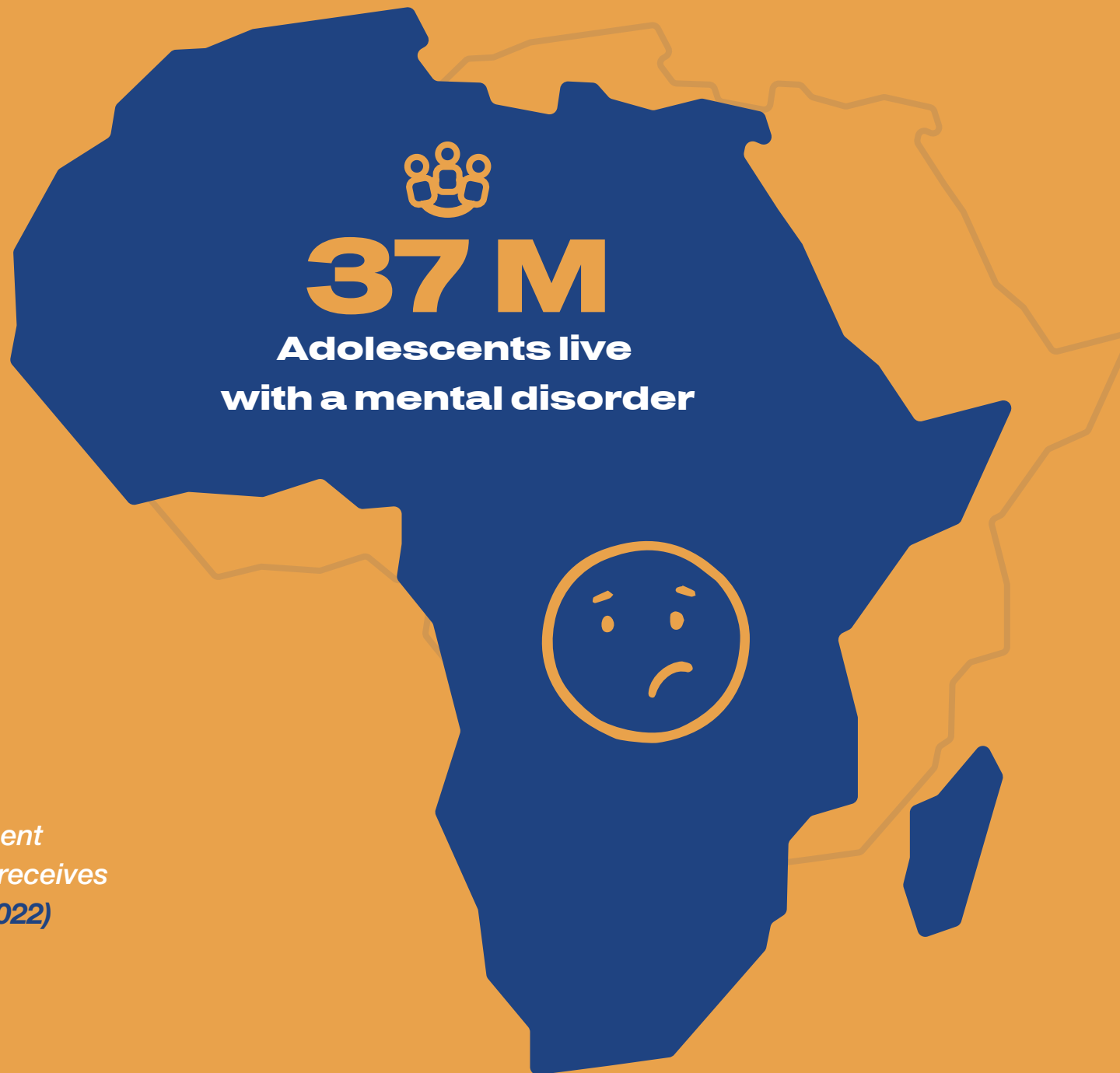
STATISTICS

The Challenges and Data

Our work is shaped by what young people tell us and what our research and programme data consistently show. By listening, learning, and testing what works on the ground, we gain a clear understanding of the real challenges young people face and design responses that are practical, relevant, and effective.

37 Million Adolescents In Africa Live With A Mental Disorder

*A UNICEF–WHO analysis shows that the continent carries one of the world's highest burdens, yet receives the least investment. **Source: UNICEF/WHO (2022)***





SYSTEMIC GAP

The Challenges and Data

60% Of Adolescents Who Reported Needing Mental Health Support In The Past Year Did Not Know Where To Obtain Help

reflecting a substantial gap in mental health literacy and effective behavioural change communication across the region. Source: UNICEF 2023

Up To 85% Of Young People Who Need Mental Health Care Receive None

Africa has fewer than 0.1 psychiatrists per 100,000 people, the lowest rate globally. Source: WHO (2023)





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FOCUS AREA STATISTICS

The Challenges and Data



SRHR without Mental Health Support is Incomplete Care

Early pregnancy, sexual violence, and HIV are closely linked to depression and anxiety among adolescents in sub-Saharan Africa, yet SRHR services rarely integrate mental health care, leaving a critical service gap. Source: Mutumba et al., 2023, BMC Public Health.

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1 In 3 Young Women Experience Gender-Based Violence Before Age 18

GBV is a leading driver of trauma, depression, anxiety, and suicide risk among adolescent girls. Source: WHO (2021)

1 In 7 Adolescents Globally Engages In Harmful Substance Use

Early exposure (as early as age 12–14) is linked to long-term mental health challenges and school dropout. Source: UNODC (2023)



Mental And The Climate

Climate change is a growing driver of anxiety, trauma and psychosocial stress, yet mental health is rarely integrated into climate adaptation and disaster-response systems in Africa.

Source: WHO (2022).



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INTERVENTION

Where We come in

MHYI's interventions are designed to respond to the real and complex factors shaping young people's mental well-being. Grounded in research, informed by lived experiences, and led by youth, our programmes combine awareness, support, creativity, and advocacy to create practical pathways for healing, resilience, and long-term change.

*We address the social determinants of youth mental health through **four interconnected thematic areas and** youth mental health through **four integrated intervention streams**, each grounded in evidence, trauma-informed practice, and youth leadership.*

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03



THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS

Our interventions - Interconnected Thematic Focus Areas



Substance Abuse

Reduction of harmful substance use among youth, early identification, and harm-reduction strategies integrated into mental health programmes.



Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Prevention of violence, support for survivors, and promotion of safer communities through education, advocacy, and psychosocial support.



Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)

Strengthening access to youth-friendly SRHR services and integrating mental health support into SRHR programming.



Climate Change

Addressing climate-related stress and anxiety, building resilience among youth living in climate-affected communities, and advocating for mental health-sensitive climate policies.

Focus



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PROGRAMMATIC PILLARS

Our interventions - Four Integrated Intervention streams

16

Awareness, Education & Youth Leadership

We drive mental health literacy and empower young people as agents of change.

Activities include:

- *School and community-based awareness workshops and peer-led discussions*
- *Training and support for youth peer educators and mental health champions*
- *Digital campaigns using youth-friendly, culturally appropriate content*
- *Engagement with parents, teachers, religious leaders, and community gatekeepers to address stigma and misinformation*
- *Behavioural change communication that addresses stigma, GBV, SRHR, substance abuse, and climate-related stress*

01



Pillars



MENTAL HEALTH
FOR YOUTH INITIATIVE

PROGRAMMATIC PILLARS

Our interventions - Four Integrated Intervention streams

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Psychosocial Support & Health Systems Strengthening

We enhance access to safe, confidential spaces for healing and connect young people to care. Services include:

- Peer and professional counselling services via telephone and digital platforms*
- Mental health first aid training for youth and community workers*
- Community-based support systems and referral pathways*
- Integration of mental health into youth health programmes*

02



Pillars



Mental Wellness, Behaviour Modification & Creative Expression

We promote healthy coping, positive habits, and healing through structured support and creative engagement.

Interventions include:

- Life skills and coping-skills training (stress management, conflict resolution, emotional regulation)*
- Arts-based and creative expression activities (music, drama, visual art, storytelling) as pathways to emotional healing, self-understanding, and behaviour change*
- Physical wellness activities (sports, movement, recreation) that build resilience and community.*

03



Pillars



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PROGRAMMATIC PILLARS

Our interventions - Four Integrated Intervention streams

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Research, Evidence & Policy Advocacy

We generate evidence and drive systems change. Our work includes:

- Research on youth mental health, social determinants, and intervention effectiveness*
- Policy briefs, academic publications, and media engagement*
- Advocating with the governments and institutions for mental health integration into policies*
- Co-design of evidence-based solutions with communities and young people*

04

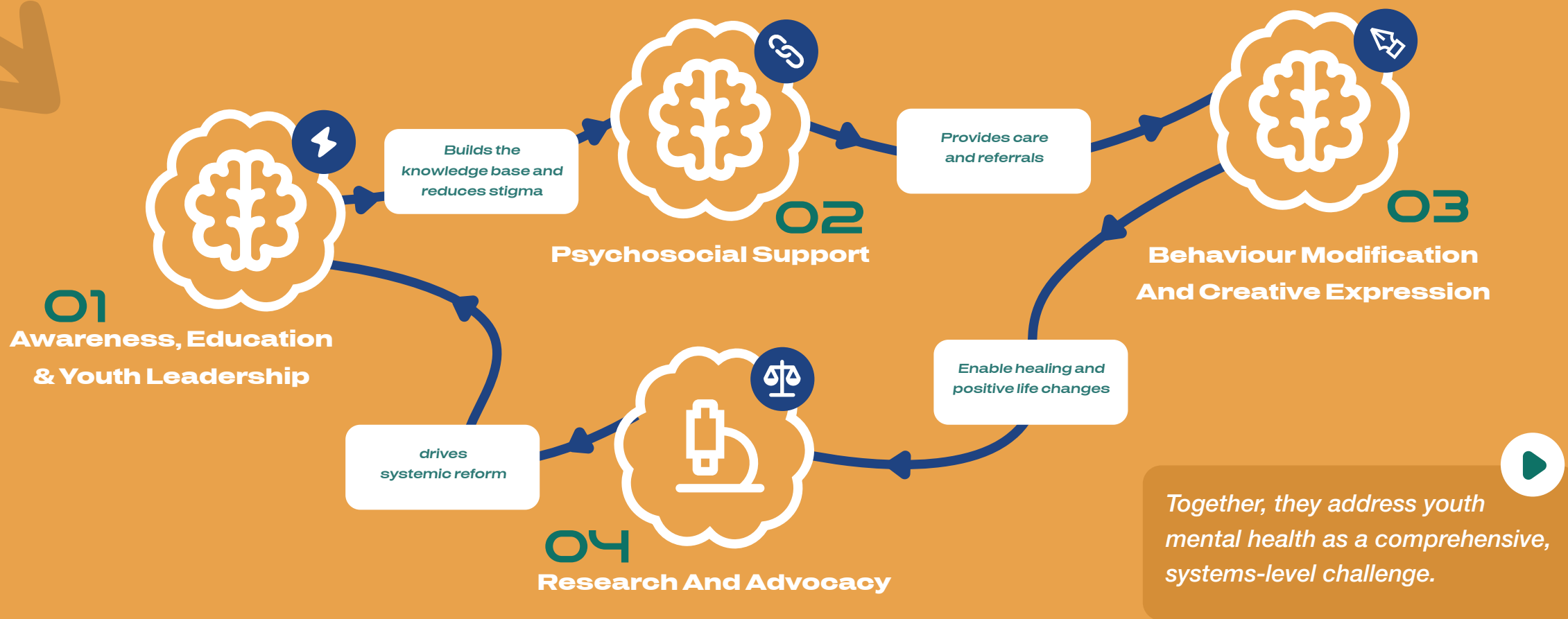


Pillars



INTEGRATION ACROSS THE 4 PILLARS

All four Programmatic Pillars are interconnected





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OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Plan

MHYI's strategic goals for 2025–2030 are guided by its commitment to expand access, deepen impact, and strengthen systems that support youth mental health. Each goal aligns with the organisation's Theory of Change and flagship programs, ensuring measurable outcomes and long-term sustainability.

(2025–2030)

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STRATEGIC GOALS (2025–2030)

Measurable outcomes and long-term sustainability

*Strengthen Mental Health
Awareness and Education*

01

Integrate mental health education into schools and communities to increase knowledge and early intervention.

*Expand Access to Youth Mental
Health Services*

02

Improve access to affordable, inclusive mental health care for young people.

*Enhance Youth Well-being through
Creative and Safe Platforms*

03

Promote resilience and self-expression through arts-based and community-driven wellness programs.

*Build Climate Resilience and
Economic Stability*

04

Address climate-related stress and economic vulnerability through environmental and livelihood initiatives.

*Institutionalise Research, Learning,
and Policy Advocacy*

05

Use evidence to influence national and regional mental health policies.

*Advance Youth Empowerment and
Mindset Transformation*

06

Raise advocates to champion awareness creation and positive behavioural changes in their communities



IF *young people gain mental health knowledge and understand how social determinants (gender-based violence, SRHR, substance abuse, climate stress) shape their mental health,*

AND IF

they access safe, trauma-informed psychosocial support that helps them process unresolved trauma and build coping capacity,

AND IF

they develop healthy behaviours and positive coping mechanisms through skills training, creative expression, and peer support,

THEN

young people will experience improved mental wellbeing, increased agency, reduced stigma, and greater help-seeking behaviour.

AND IF

evidence-informed policy advocacy drives systemic change at national, regional, and continental levels to institutionalise youth mental health as core infrastructure,

THEN

communities, institutions, and governments will recognise youth mental health as foundational to productivity, leadership capacity, and democratic resilience.

THEN

Africa will unlock its demographic dividend by investing in the psychological health of its 420 million young people.



UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS

MHYI operates on the following theory of change

Young People Want To Heal; They Need Safe Spaces, Knowledge, And Support

- *Trauma and unresolved emotional challenges are addressable with evidence-based interventions*
- *Behaviour change is possible when young people understand the root causes*
- *Government partnerships enable systems change faster than standalone programming*
- *Youth leadership and peer support amplify reach and sustainability*
- *Regional and continental policy frameworks harmonise approaches across*



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INITIATIVES

Projects and Portfolios

Showcases our mission in action, delivering practical, youth-centred solutions that respond to real mental health needs. Each programme is designed to be scalable, evidence-informed, and rooted in community, ensuring meaningful impact for young people across diverse contexts.

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EMBRACE YOUR MIND

A Mental Health Guide

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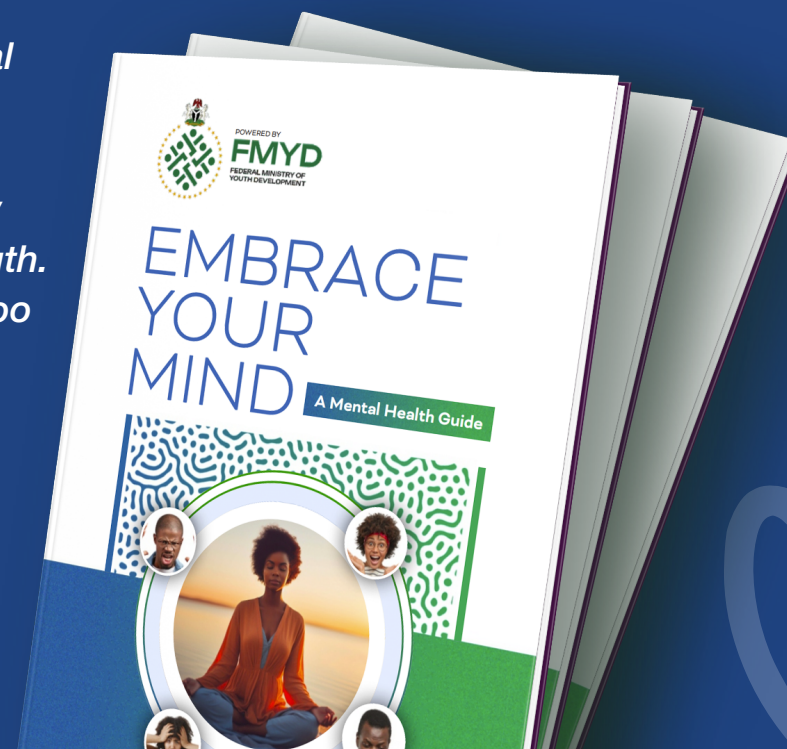
Most young people carrying a mental health burden have never been given the language to describe it, let alone the tools to address it. Embrace Your Mind: A Mental Health Guide was written for them.

Developed by Mental Health for Youth Initiative in collaboration with the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Youth Development, Embrace Your Mind is a practical, youth-friendly mental health guide designed to meet young Africans exactly where they are. Written in clear, accessible language and grounded in evidence, the guide helps young people understand what mental health is, recognise the signs of struggle in themselves and others, and take meaningful steps towards support and healing.

It carries the personal foreword of Nigeria's Honourable Minister of Youth Development, and has been reviewed and endorsed by leading psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, and counsellors across Nigeria.

Since its launch in July 2025, over 1,000 copies have been distributed to young people, educators, and community workers across Nigeria, making it one of the few government-endorsed mental health resources designed specifically for African youth. Embrace Your Mind is more than a book. It is the beginning of a conversation that too many young people have never been allowed to have. It is also a reminder that your mind is worth knowing, protecting, and embracing.

Guide





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THE INFORMED GENERATION

TIG - Creating a mentally aware generation

27

The Informed Generation is MHYI's school-based mental health awareness initiative that uses the Embrace Your Mind book and workbook, sensitization workshops, and trained teachers or counsellors to make mental health education a regular part of school life. It helps students understand themselves better, build healthier habits, and grow in knowledge, confidence, and self-worth.

Mental Health Literacy And School Based Support

The Informed Generation is about making mental health a normal part of school life. By using the Embrace Your Mind book and workbook, and training teachers and counsellors to lead regular sensitization sessions, we help students understand themselves better, build self worth, and make healthier choices before challenges turn into crisis.

This is your opportunity to be part of something that truly matters.

Help schools become places where young people are informed, supported, and equipped to thrive. Step forward and help turn mental health awareness into a lasting part of education.



Awareness



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TALK TO TEE
A safe space to air

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Talk to Tee is a digital mental health support platform that creates a safe, inclusive space for young people to share their stories, access psychoeducation, and connect to mental health support. With our primary audience being African youth, Living Vine Mental Health Foundation and Ubuntu Wellspring are our partners on this project

Core Components And Key Highlights

- ▶ *Sharing of life experiences*
- ▶ *Integrated referral services and optional access to therapy sessions.*
- ▶ *Podcasts, real-life conversations, vox pop features, and social media awareness content*
- ▶ *5,000 participants in the first year, with a projected 50% annual audience growth.*
- ▶ *Incorporates psychoeducation, storytelling, and real-life testimonials.*
- ▶ *Integration with health and social support providers*

Safe





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CLEAN CAMP HEROES

Mental health vand Hygiene

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Youth-led environmental initiative supported by the European Union and Global Youth Mobilisation that trains 100 young people across five Abuja IDP camps on waste management, circular economy and waste-to-wealth skills, improves environmental conditions through essential infrastructure and stakeholder engagement, and ultimately benefits over 5,000 residents by reducing environmental stressors that harm mental well-being. This project is implemented in collaboration with Mind Innovation and Health Reform Africa.

Key Highlights

- ▶ 500 Clean Camp Heroes trained across five Abuja IDP camps (50% male, 50% female).
- ▶ Waste-to-Wealth training introduced for sustainable youth empowerment.
- ▶ Partnership with the Federal Ministry of Youth Development.
- ▶ Expansion plan to reach 200 camp heroes annually from 2027 to 2030.

Our approach positions us to adequately respond to the evolving needs of young people while remaining anchored in evidence, innovation, and collaboration.

Clean



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ARTVOCACY
Technology + Art

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An annual creative campaign combining art, poetry, and performance to address mental health through cultural expression. It focuses on building real human connections and promoting mental well-being through creativity.

Key Highlights

- ▶ 1,000 participants in the first year, growing by 50% annually.
- ▶ Hybrid events are expanding to other Nigerian states and partner countries.
- ▶ On-site therapists and safe spaces are integrated into each event.
- ▶ Collaboration with creative communities such as Abuja Literary Society.



Art



Since its inception in 2019, MHYI has grown from a small, youth-led movement into a continental organisation that is shaping the future of mental health advocacy and access across Africa.

Through consistent outreach, partnerships, and innovative programs, MHYI has:

- ◆ ***Published “Embrace your mind”, a mental health guide for young people in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Youth Development and TIKO Africa, and distributed 1,000 copies since launch in July 2025.***
- ◆ ***Co-created the YO! Health initiative with the Federal Ministry of Youth Development to address prevailing youth challenges in July 2025.***
- ◆ ***Reached over 300,000 youth directly through physical programs, workshops, and campaigns.***
- ◆ ***Engaged more than 4 million youth indirectly through digital campaigns, social media advocacy, and awareness initiatives.***
- ◆ ***Trained 64 volunteers and youth leaders who have served as peer advocates, facilitators, and community mobilizers.***
- ◆ ***Established partnerships with national ministries, civil society organisations, and international bodies, solidifying MHYI’s credibility as a thought leader in youth mental health.***

Our impact is not only in numbers but in lives transformed, voices amplified, and systems changed to make mental health a right, not a privilege.



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PARTNERSHIPS

Handshakes and Collaborations

We believe that lasting change in youth mental health is only possible through strong partnerships. We work closely with government institutions, civil society organisations, community groups, and international partners to co-create programmes, strengthen systems, and scale impact in ways no single actor can achieve alone.

#more than 27 pivotal Partnerships and counting...

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OG



Handshakes



Handshakes



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WHY COLLABORATE? OR INVEST IN MHYI?

Investment and Collaborative notions

Investing in MHYI is an investment in sustainable, youth-driven solutions that address the root causes of mental health challenges. Our work combines community ownership, early intervention, innovation, and evidence to deliver measurable impact and long-term value for partners committed to building a healthier and more resilient generation.

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01

Youth-Led, Community-Driven Impact

Delivering more sustainable mental health outcomes, which MHYI advances through champions, school clubs, and grassroots partnerships.

02

Early, Determinant-Focused Intervention Creates The Greatest Impact

Half of mental health conditions start by age 14, early intervention is vital, and MHYI integrates school and community programs to improve long-term youth well-being.

03

Innovative Art + Tech Model

WHO and NIMHRI research shows creative and digital approaches improve youth engagement and help-seeking; MHYI applies this through ArtVocacy and Talk to Tee.

04

Proven Approach Backed By Data

Our programs generate real-time data that informs research and policy, supporting evidence-based interventions with greater effectiveness and scalability.

05

Grant-Ready With Strong Institutional Partnerships

Through partnerships with federal ministries, regional actors, and international funders, MHYI provides a credible, scalable platform for impactful investment across Africa.





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CONTACT & BRANDING STATEMENT

Outlets And Idealism

MHYI is built on connection, collaboration, and shared purpose. This section provides the information and identity that help partners, supporters, and communities engage with our work, connect with our team, and join us in advancing youth mental health across Africa.

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08



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THE BRAND

Investment and Collaborative notions

MHYI believes that a mentally healthy generation is the foundation of a thriving Africa. Through our programs, partnerships, and youth-led advocacy, we are building a future where every young person has access to the knowledge, support, and tools needed to achieve holistic well-being.

We welcome individuals, organisations, and institutions that share this vision to collaborate with us in co-creating programs, supporting campaigns, or investing in youth mental health innovation across the continent.

**Together, we can empower minds
and transform futures.**



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CONTACTS AND OUTLETS

Do well to Keep in-touch

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Thank you

Empowering Young Minds. Transforming Futures.

*Thank you for taking the time to explore the MHYI Company Profile.
Your attention to these details helps preserve who we are and ensures every interaction reflects
our empathy, trust, and commitment to growth.*

*By embracing these standards, you play a vital role in keeping the MHYI story consistent,
inspiring, and unmistakably ours — a story of compassion, connection, and courage.*

Mhyi

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2026

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