

ANMF Grant Application

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Organization Information

Organization Name	Nepal Institute of Mental Health (NIOMH)
Street Address	Maharajgunj, KMC 3 Bagmati 44600
City/Town/Village	Kathmandu
District	Kathmandu
Website	www.niomh.org
Social Welfare Council (SWC)	Registered
Organization Director	Dr Shreedhar Paudel
Contact Person	Dr Sanjay Yadav
Title	President, Executive Committee, NIOMH

Organization Mission

To implement quality mental health services, training, and research and develop sustainable mental health care in a regional eco-system.

Organization Description

NIOMH (<https://www.niomh.org>) is a health initiative in Nepal, that promotes integration of mental health care into multiple sectors. It supports the delivery of specialized mental health service with aim to increase access and promotes mental health advocacy and awareness. NIOMH has representation from public health, psychiatry, psychology, social work, and nursing. In 2021, NIOMH implemented a free tele mental health program to address needs of 600 people affected by COVID-19. NIOMH is currently running mental health integration program at a homeless rehabilitation center. It launched an integrated mental health care center in September 2022 with aim to provide quality mental health care service to regional community. Relevant to the proposed project, NIOMH has been running a digital mental health awareness program at national level, by designing, peer reviewing and posting illustrative posters and animated videos every week on topics of depression and anxiety via social media platforms.

Population Served

NIOMH, with its larger goal to increase mental health access to care, aims to serve population across Nepal. It has primary focus on improving health care access to the more vulnerable and marginalized population. Currently the services have been initiated in rural and semi-urban areas of Eastern Chitwan District. The proposed project aims to reach both rural and urban population of all age groups, utilizing the platform of radio.

Project Information

Project Title	Radio-based Mental Health Literacy (MHL) Program to Reduce Stigma and Promote Mental Health Care Seeking Behavior In Nepal
Project Location	Integrated Mental Health Center, Ratnanagar-1, Next to Harihar Temple, Chitwan, Nepal

Total Project Budget	18500 USD
Grant Request	17000 USD
Conversion Rate	132.5
Project Start Date	August 15, 2023
Project Duration	12 months

Project Summary

NIOMH's Radio-based Mental Health Literacy (MHL) Program is a public health intervention that aims to deliver mental health awareness modules to a combined rural and urban audience of Nepal utilizing radio as a media platform. Additionally, the program will incorporate interactive sessions engaging active radio listener's group for an impactful delivery of the content. The project activities will include designing, developing, and delivering mental health literacy (MHL) focused interactive programs utilizing a) radio episodes and b) active radio listening groups.

Target groups:

Primary Target Group (TG) are specific groups such as youth groups, professional groups, female community health volunteer groups, aimed to be 60 participants.

Secondary TG is the active or passive listening rural and urban general population reached by the live radio shows and online available content, estimated to be at least 300,000 people of all age groups in several districts of Bagmati and Gandaki provinces. Leading FM stations based in Chitwan are reported to have listenership of up to 50,00,000 people.

Project goals

The program's broader goals are to promote mental health awareness and increase mental health help seeking behavior. Radio show components will be aimed towards achieving and maintenance of positive mental health, increasing self-efficacy, gaining information on mental disorders and treatments, addressing stigma, and incorporating rights based mental health care. The project is committed to making the program highly engaging for the listeners and participants.

Specific Goals

- 1) Increase understanding of Mental health, Mental illness, and their treatments
 - § Plan- Implementing Radio Based mental health literacy program as described in the project summary and additional details section.
 - § Challenges-Reaching out to the marginalized and vulnerable population to disseminate Mental Health information.
 - § Plans to overcome the challenges-Expand the reach of the radio-based literacy program by utilizing Networks of FM for further penetration
 - § Measured by-Primary TG Interactive radio listener's group will have 60 % improvement in knowledge of mental health related stigma and symptoms of mental health. This will be assessed pre- and post-intervention by 'Mental Health Knowledge Schedule' scale that comprises domains of evidence-based knowledge in relation to stigma reduction.

- 2) Reduce Stigma related to Mental Disorders
 - § Plan- By Implementing Radio Based mental health literacy program as described in the project summary and additional details section.
 - § Challenges-Stigma on mental health and illness is one of the most challenging of all universal problems. Despite each radio episode having a significant focus on stigma reduction, it will be hard to measure the changes in stigma level, particularly among the secondary target group of broader population (estimated 300000 people) who will be actively or passively listening to the MHL radio programs. The participatory approach of the radio based MHL is expected to reduce stigma by providing an open space for communication, feedback, questions.
 - § Plans to overcome the challenges-The primary target group comprising of the active radio listener's group, who

will have direct interaction with the NIOMH Radio MHL team, will receive pre- and post-intervention assessment to measure the changes in stigma

§ Measured by-Primary TG Interactive radio listener's group will have 60 % improvement in knowledge of mental health related stigma and symptoms of mental health. This will be assessed pre- and post-intervention by 'Mental Health Knowledge Schedule' scale that comprises domains of evidence-based knowledge in relation to stigma reduction.

3)Increase Mental health help seeking behaviors

§ Plan- By Implementing Radio Based mental health literacy program as described in the project summary and additional details section.

§ Challenges-Mental health help seeking behavior is dependent on the literacy and availability of resources which is significantly lacking in majority of the areas of Nepal.

§ Plans to overcome the challenges-The radio program content will have lay-language explanation of mental health topics and curated list of resources.

§ Measure- Primary TG Interactive radio listener's group participants will have 60% increased awareness of the help seeking strategies and mental health resources assessed by semi-structured, open-ended questionnaire.

Why project is needed

Nepal, currently listed as one of the lower-Middle Income Countries (LMIC), experiences a profound mental health care gap. The driving factors include deepened stigma, lack of human resources and severe underinvestment, with less than 1% of government's health budget allocated to mental health services. Increasing mental health literacy (MHL) becomes important in countering stigma and stimulating access to care. One of the ways of delivering MHL is by use of mass media methods. Radio serves as a widely available media platform in Nepal and its access has been boosted by the penetration of internet. Prior efforts of utilizing radio as a tool to implement awareness programs have been limited. We are not aware of radio series that have concentrated on mental health awareness at a broader regional or national level, utilizing systematic modules and interactive methods. Our program will address mental health knowledge gaps and relay information on mental health interventions and pathways to care.