

EQUIP: TRANSFORMING MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT



IOM Nigeria began providing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services in 2014. They offer assistance to migrants including internally displaced persons and returnees, as well as host community members. Services include counselling, socio-relational activities, and psychoeducation. They also co-chair the MHPSS technical working group for the Northeast, establishing referral pathways, delivering trainings, and deploying psychiatric nurses to remote areas.

**EQUIP COMPETENCY-BASED
APPROACH**

Training of
specialized workers
(psychologists,
psychiatric nurses,
nurses)



Training of non
specialized workers
(community mobilizers,
social workers, teachers
and (lay) counselors)



**SPECIALIZED MENTAL HEALTH
SERVICES**

▶ Secondary referrals for
specialized care



▶ Mental Health
Services



**COMMUNITY-BASED PSYCHOSOCIAL
SUPPORT SERVICES & (PEER) SUPPORT
GROUPS**

▶ Socio-relational activities
(e.g., sport and play, art-
based interventions,
cultural activities and
celebrations)”



▶ Lay counselling



▶ Informal education
sessions



**STRUCTURES SUPPORTED THROUGH
EQUIP APPROACH, AS OF 2022/23**

- ✓ **18** Psychosocial Mobile Teams (PMTs)
- ✓ **8** MHPSS resource centers
- ✓ **2** Referral teams
- ✓ **54** Program staff, specialists and non-specialists trained

“EQUIP strengthens existing tools and resources that IOM uses for service delivery to meet the specific needs, concerns, and challenges of the populations we serve.”



IOM Nigeria Program Staff

EQUIP: PROGRAM WIDE COMPETENCY-BASED APPROACH IN NIGERIA

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) Nigeria provides mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services to individuals, including migrants and persons affected by displacement and other forms of violence.

The IOM MHPSS Unit operates with 18 interdisciplinary psychosocial mobile team members, 8 MHPSS resource centers, and two referral teams serving different areas. These teams offer a holistic set of psychosocial support services to communities, including recreational activities for children, education sessions, and counseling and support groups.

IOM also supports existing mental health services through rehabilitation initiatives, training programs, and the deployment of psychiatric nurses to remote areas. The organization engages with local communities to identify and address key needs and raise awareness about issues such as gender-based violence and protection.

Specialized services include secondary referrals for specialized mental health care at the Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital in Maiduguri and the Specialist Hospital in Yola.

EQUIP and Competency-Based Training

In 2019, IOM Nigeria adopted the EQUIP competency-based approach to improve the existing training and supervision of MHPSS specialist and non-specialist service providers. 54 individuals underwent the training that included ENACT competency assessments. Trainees included psychiatric nurses, social workers, and community health workers. The approach aimed to ensure that providers were competent, compassionate, and equipped to deliver care that caused no harm.

To incorporate EQUIP into their training programs, providers were assessed on relevant competencies before the training through short role-plays, which helped identify areas that the training needed to focus on. The use of EQUIP competency assessments

throughout the training helped trainers provide personalized feedback to trainees, focusing on areas requiring improvement. At the end of the training, a series of role-plays and assessments were carried out to evaluate the impact of the training on the competencies of the participants and identify competencies where ongoing support was required.

The Impact of EQUIP on the Workforce

The use of the EQUIP competency-based approach has led to transformative changes in IOM Nigeria's MHPSS efforts. The EQUIP competency-based approach has been beneficial for trainers, trainees, staff and supervisors. Key elements such as role-play based competency assessments and feedback have helped trainers tailor training to participants' needs. The approach has also become a practical tool for supervisors to assess competency levels among their teams on an ongoing basis and provide appropriate refresher training. Ultimately, the adoption of this approach has improved service quality and enabled IOM to enhance service delivery to meet the unique needs of the populations they serve.

Expanding the use of EQUIP

IOM Nigeria has used EQUIP to improve their staff and relevant government partners' competencies to deliver safe and effective MHPSS services. It has contributed significantly to IOM Nigeria's capability to strengthen service delivery for conflict-affected areas.

IOM Nigeria's MHPSS Unit works to ensure that individuals and communities affected by conflict receive the support they need. Through the integration of EQUIP competency-based approach, they have not only enhanced the competencies of their workforce but also strengthened the foundations of their MHPSS services.