

Principal Investigator for Longitudinal Impact Evaluation
The Impact of Group Interpersonal Psychotherapy on Depressive Women and their Children
StrongMinds and Child Relief International

Summary

StrongMinds is a social enterprise organization whose mission is to treat and improve the lives of 2 million women with depression in Africa by 2025. Since 2014, StrongMinds has administered a structured 12-week group interpersonal psychotherapy (IPT-G) curriculum to women with depression in Uganda. Informal evaluations suggest that the intervention is associated with decreased depression and additional benefits to women's well-being and to the well-being of their family members.

StrongMinds and Child Relief International (CRI) seek a qualified researcher to design and lead a longitudinal randomized control trial (RCT) to assess the long-term impacts of interpersonal group psychotherapy for depressed mothers on patients, children, and household members in Uganda. The costs of the study will be sponsored in part by Child Relief International.

Background

Depression in Africa affects more than 60 million women and is the number one disabler of women, afflicting them at twice the rate of men. More than 85% of these women have no access to effective treatment.

StrongMinds employs a talk therapy model known as group interpersonal psychotherapy or IPT-G. The model was first successfully implemented in Uganda by Johns Hopkins University in 2002.¹ StrongMinds has adapted this treatment model and has treated over 1,800 depressed women since 2014.

StrongMinds and Child Relief International seek to sponsor an impact evaluation, preferably a longitudinal randomized control trial (RCT), to assess the long-term impacts of interpersonal group psychotherapy for depressed mothers on patients, children, and household members in Uganda. CRI is particularly interested in the long term impact on children. We envision measuring the relative effects of two treatment arms versus one control. The two treatment arms would be IPT-G and group meetings without a trained leader. The control would be no intervention. If it were cost-effective, an additional treatment arm would explore the impact of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy via a mobile phone application.

The proposed study will take place in two areas of Uganda where StrongMinds operates: the peri-urban slums of Kampala and select urban and rural sections of Iganga District in the eastern region of the country (see map below). The population to be studied will be adult women suffering from depression as measured by the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9). The typical patient is an adult mother of 3+ children managing a household income of approximately USD 2 per day.

¹ Bolton, Paul, et al. Group Interpersonal Psychotherapy for Depression in Rural Uganda. JAMA, June 18, 2003: 289; 3117- 3124.



Scope of Work

StrongMinds and Child Relief International seek a qualified researcher to serve as Principal Investigator (PI) for this study, to be responsible for study design and oversight. The study is anticipated to take the form of a five-year randomized control trial, but the sponsors are open to alternative methodologies. Study proposals must be based on quantitative measures of outcomes. Proposal should include a detailed discussion of how statistical and methodological issues will be addressed and how the project will be implemented. For example, if an RCT is proposed, how will control and treatment groups be selected? Proposals should also include detailed discussion of how selection bias and attrition bias will be addressed as well as how the researcher will ensure accuracy in the reported outcomes.

The PI is expected to lead protocol and statistical analysis plan development, provide oversight and guidance to lead study execution and team management, conduct data analysis and prepare at least one paper for publication.

Deliverables include: final study methodology, sampling plan, budget (to be developed in concert with collaborators), progress and final reports, and an article for publication in a peer reviewed journal. Funding will be conditional upon the completion of agreed upon deliverables.

Qualifications

The preferred candidate will possess:

- A PhD in economics, statistics, psychology, or a related field; or equivalent experience coupled with course work in those fields. Copies of published research would be helpful.
- At least 2 years' experience conducting research and related quantitative analysis.
- Experience designing RCTs and household-based longitudinal surveys in the developing world may be beneficial.
- Academic researchers are preferred.

To Apply

Please submit a CV and a 1-2 page statement of interest addressing parameters above to info@strongminds.org by **May 2, 2016**. The sponsors will invite then investigators to submit a more detailed study proposal.

About StrongMinds

StrongMinds is a 501(c)(3) social enterprise based in New Jersey that focuses on one of the most underserved populations and one of the most pervasive mental illnesses in the world. Together with our affiliate, StrongMinds Uganda, we treat depression among women in Africa, where access for mental health treatment is extremely limited. We presently operate in Uganda, a post-conflict and highly impoverished country where 1 out of every 4 adults suffers from depression. As the only organization with a model specifically designed to scale a solution for depression in Africa, we provide a simple, innovative and cost effective approach. Group interpersonal psychotherapy, facilitated by trained community workers, is a proven technique that helps these depressed women return to and maintain their full mental health. Ultimately, StrongMinds helps women who suffer from depression to turn their lives, and those of their family, around.