

Outcomes of the mental health and development model in rural Kenya: a 2-year prospective cohort intervention study.

[Lund C](#), [Waruguru M](#), [Kingori J](#), [Kippen-Wood S](#), [Breuer E](#), [Mannarath S](#), [Raja S](#).

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Background: The aim of this study was to evaluate outcomes for participants in BasicNeeds' Mental Health and Development programme in rural Kenya. **Methods** All new entrants to the programme in the Meru South and Nyeri North districts were enrolled in the study over a 3-month period ($n = 203$). Assessments of mental health, functioning, economic status and quality of life were conducted at baseline and at 1-year and 2-year follow up, using a single group cohort design. **Results:** Over the 2 years there were significant improvements in scores on the General Health Questionnaire (21.5 [95% CI: 20.2–22.8] to 6 [95% CI: 4.8–7.2] $p < 0.01$), Global Assessment of Functioning scale (78 [95% CI: 75.5–80.3] to 94 [95% CI: 90.7–97.3] $p < 0.01$), summed WHO Quality of Life-Brief scale (39.5 [95% CI: 38.6–40.4] to 57.2 [95% CI: 56.2–58.3] $p < 0.01$) and the proportion who were engaged in either income generation or productive work (45.3–64.0%, $p < 0.01$). **Conclusions:** The mental health and development model shows improvements in mental health, functioning, income generation and quality of life among people living with severe mental illness in rural Kenya. The findings demonstrate the feasibility and benefits of integrating mental health and poverty alleviation components in mental health care in Africa.