

T1D COMMUNITY GRANT

PROJECT UPDATES

July 2025

BAITAMBOGWE COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE INITIATIVE (BACHI)

PROJECT TITLE: Provision of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services for Type 1 Diabetic Children and Adolescents at Jinja Regional Referral Hospital (JRRH)

PROJECT GOAL: To establish a comprehensive mental health and psychosocial support system for children and adolescents with Type 1 diabetes at Jinja Regional Referral Hospital, Iganga Hospital and Kabukye Trust DM clinics.

Objectives

1. Train healthcare workers and adolescent peers on integrating psychosocial care into diabetes management.
2. Provide regular psychological assessments and counselling services to Type 1 diabetic children and adolescents.
3. Establish peer support groups to enhance emotional support and reduce stigma among children and adolescents with Type 1 diabetes.
4. Engage families and caregivers through psychoeducation to strengthen home-based support systems for mental health and psychosocial support.

Target Group

- Children and adolescents (ages 10–19) with Type 1 diabetes at 3 targeted DM clinics.
- Families and caregivers of Children and adolescents (ages 10–19) diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes.
- Other beneficiaries are type 1 DM patients of 20 years and above.

Key Activities

1. Mental health screenings for all registered diabetic children and adolescents.
2. Train type 1 diabetes health service providers on basic Mental Healthcare and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS).
3. Train/Orient adolescent peer leaders in MHPSS for diabetic peers.

4. Provide individual and group counselling tailored to the psychosocial needs of children and adolescents with diabetes.
5. Conduct monthly peer support group meetings for adolescents.
6. Organise and conduct quarterly caregivers' meetings on mental health challenges related to diabetes.
7. Technical support supervision to diabetic clinics.

Expected Outcomes

1. Strengthened capacity of healthcare workers to deliver psychosocially informed care.
2. Improved emotional well-being among children and adolescents with Type 1 diabetes.
3. Increased adherence to diabetes treatment and quality of life.
4. Reduced diabetes-related hospital admissions linked to psychological distress
5. Family support systems strengthened in providing mental and psychosocial support to their family members with diabetes.

ACTIVITY PROGRESS

Staff orientation on the project

On 22nd May 2025, the Program Manager T1D Community Grant at BACHI conducted a one-day orientation for the project team. The session aimed introducing the team to the project's overall goal, specific objectives, partnering health facilities, and key activities planned for implementation and drawing actions towards project implementation.

Inception meeting at JRRH

On May 29, 2025, BACHI and Jinja Regional Referral Hospital (JRRH) convened an inception meeting to align stakeholders on the implementation of a mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) project for children and adolescents with Type 1 diabetes across JRRH, Kabukye Trust Diabetic Clinic, and Iganga General Hospital. The meeting, attended by representatives from paediatric, psychiatric, and adolescent care services, featured a detailed presentation, outlining the project's objectives, and roles and responsibilities of each party. Key activities were discussed and implementation modalities agreed upon.



BACH and JRRH in an inception meeting

Follow-up and integration of mental health diabetic patient into his community.

BACHI, in partnership with Jinja Regional Referral Hospital (JRRH), implemented a comprehensive reintegration initiative for Isaac, a 15-year-old adolescent living with Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus (T1D) and psychotic depression, aimed at restoring his continuity of care and strengthening family support. Following a three-year dropout from treatment, Isaac reappeared in critical condition, revealing deep-rooted family conflict, cultural misconceptions, and abandonment risks. A multidisciplinary response involved medical and psychosocial counselling, caregiver training in insulin and symptom management, formal caregiver commitments, and engagement of child protection services due to the father’s prolonged absence. The initiative recommends scaling this integrated model to other districts, investing in community health worker training, and formalizing multi-sector partnerships to support vulnerable children with chronic illnesses.



Community follow-up of T1D patient

Training of health workers in mental health and psychosocial support.

From June 17th to 19th, 2025, BACHI, in partnership with Jinja Regional Referral Hospital, held a three-day training at the Jinja District Health Office to equip 12 health workers from JRRH, Iganga General Hospital, and Kabukye Trust Diabetic Clinic with knowledge and practical skills in mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for children and adolescents living with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D). The training addressed the gap in psychosocial care for T1D, covering diabetes basics, insulin use, glucose monitoring, and managing complications like hyperglycaemia and diabetic ketoacidosis. Mental health sessions focused on depression, anxiety, substance abuse, stigma, and the use of screening tools such as SRQ-20, SAD PERSONS, AUDIT-C+1, and CAGE. The event concluded with closing remarks from key stakeholders and a certificate ceremony, reinforcing the importance of integrating MHPSS into chronic care for T1D youth.



Health workers attending MHPSS training

Training of T1D adolescent patients in mental health and psycho social support.

From June 24th to 26th, 2025, BACHI, in collaboration with Jinja Regional Referral Hospital (JRRH), conducted a three-day training at Ntinda Valley Resort Hotel, Iganga, to build the capacity of 12 adolescent peer educators from JRRH, Iganga Hospital, and Kabukye Trust Diabetic Clinic in providing basic mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) to their peers. The training addressed the psychosocial gaps often overlooked in T1D care, despite the rising prevalence in Uganda. Major topics covered included; fundamentals of T1D management, including

insulin use and diabetic ketoacidosis, mental health challenges among T1D such as depression, stigma, substance use, and the use of culturally sensitive assessment tools, peer counselling techniques and referral pathways, peer educator roles, ethical practices, and peer-led support. Additional activities included personal experience sharing, and blood sugar monitoring.



T1D adolescent peers attending MHPSS training

(JRRH) has made significant progress toward establishing a holistic care model for young people living with T1D. Through a structured series of activities including staff orientation, stakeholder engagement, reintegration of vulnerable patients like Isaac, and targeted training sessions for both health workers and adolescent peer educators. The project has begun to bridge the critical gap between physical and mental healthcare. Notable outcomes include enhanced health worker capacity, empowered peer support networks, strengthened caregiver involvement, and a functional coordination framework across three key facilities (JRRH, Iganga Hospital, and Kabukye Trust Diabetic Clinic). The project is well-positioned to improve emotional well-being, treatment adherence, and long-term resilience among adolescents with T1D. Going forward, continued implementation of planned activities, follow-ups, and stakeholder collaboration will be essential to ensure the sustainability and scalability of this integrated MHPSS model.

Technical Support supervision at JRRH

On 10th July 2025, a technical support supervision visit was conducted at the Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) Clinic for Children and Adolescents at Jinja Regional Referral Hospital, following recent MHPSS training by BACHI. The visit aimed to monitor the application of mental health tools and assess peer supporters' involvement. A total of 43 T1D adolescents attended, with peer supporters leading education sessions and conducting mental health screenings using the SRQ-20, identifying 12 adolescents with signs of psychological distress. The visit confirmed good progress in integrating mental health into T1D care.



BACHI staff addressing T1D youths

Conclusion

Provision of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services for Type 1 Diabetic Children and Adolescents at Jinja Regional Referral Hospital