



PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT (2023)

1. Project Information

- **Project Title:** Trauma Healing and Women's Empowerment Initiative
 - **Implementing Organization:** BARLISTRIVE YOUTH MULTI-PURPOSE SOCIETY
 - **Project Location:** Chibombo District, Zambia
 - **Funder:** Refugee Led Innovation Fund
 - **Grant Amount:** USD 45,000
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2. Background and Rationale

The project was designed to address the growing need for psychosocial support among refugee and vulnerable women and girls residing in Chibombo District. Many beneficiaries had experienced conflict-related trauma, sexual and gender-based violence (GBV), displacement, and loss of livelihoods.

These experiences significantly affected their mental health, limiting their participation in community life, economic activities, and decision-making processes. The project recognized trauma as a key barrier to women's empowerment and aimed to provide structured, gender-responsive interventions.

3. Project Objectives

- To provide trauma-informed psychosocial counselling to vulnerable women and girls
- To strengthen community-based support systems through peer counsellors





- To raise awareness on mental health and prevention of GBV
 - To promote women's empowerment through resilience and participation
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4. Implementation Approach

The project adopted a community-based, survivor-centered approach, combining professional counselling with peer-led support systems.

Key Strategies:

- Integration of individual counselling and group healing sessions
 - Training of local women as peer counsellors
 - Community outreach to reduce stigma and increase awareness
 - Collaboration with local service providers for referrals
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5. Key Activities Conducted

5.1 Psychosocial Counselling

- Delivered confidential one-on-one counselling sessions
- Facilitated group therapy sessions for shared healing

5.2 Establishment of Healing Circles

- Formed **10 women-led healing groups**





- Created safe spaces for dialogue, peer support, and recovery

5.3 Capacity Building

- Trained **25 women as peer counsellors and trauma advocates**
- Strengthened local capacity to sustain support systems

5.4 Community Awareness Campaigns

- Conducted outreach on mental health and GBV prevention
- Engaged community leaders to address stigma and harmful norms

5.5 Referral and Support Services

- Linked survivors to health, legal, and protection services
- Strengthened coordination with local stakeholders

6. Results and Impact

Quantitative Results:

- 600+ women and girls reached with counselling services
- 25 trained peer counsellors actively supporting communities
- 10 functional healing circles established





Qualitative Impact:

- Reduced symptoms of trauma, anxiety, and depression
 - Increased confidence and participation of women in community activities
 - Improved awareness and reporting of GBV cases
 - Strengthened social support networks among women
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7. Challenges Encountered

- High demand for services exceeding available resources
 - Persistent stigma surrounding mental health and GBV
 - Limited transport and outreach capacity
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8. Lessons Learned

- Peer-led approaches enhance trust and sustainability
 - Safe spaces are critical for trauma recovery
 - Integrating psychosocial support with empowerment improves outcomes
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9. Sustainability and Way Forward

The project strengthened community capacity through trained peer counsellors who continue providing support beyond the project period.

Future plans include:

- Expanding services to more communities
 - Strengthening partnerships with stakeholders
 - Scaling the model to other districts
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10. Conclusion

The project successfully demonstrated that trauma healing is essential for women's empowerment. By restoring dignity, confidence, and resilience, women are better positioned to participate actively in their communities and improve their livelihoods.

