

TRANSFORM NEWSLETTER #1

January 2022

WELCOME TO THE "TRANSFORM" STUDY!

WHAT IS "TRANSFORM"?

The TRANSFORM "Transforming Access to Care for Serious Mental Disorders in Slums" is a 4-year research project funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), a United Kingdom government agency which funds research into global health and social care.

WHAT IS THE AIM OF THE TRANSFORM PROJECT?

The TRANSFORM project aims to help people with Serious Mental Disorder (SMD) to receive good quality care and treatment. Serious Mental Disorders (SMDs) are psychotic disorders where people have abnormal thoughts and perceptions leading to loss touch with reality. The project will develop ways for traditional and faith healers, mental health professionals, primary care practitioners and community health workers (CHWs) can work together to provide the best treatment to improve the lives of people with serious mental illness and their families.



Local healer practicing in slum

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS RESEARCH?

People with serious mental disorders living in poor urban areas have very little access to good quality mental health care. People with mental illness and their families frequently seek help from their traditional, faith healers and continue the treatment without the biomedical care as these types of treatments are more accessible and affordable and also due to multiple sociocultural factors. However, most of the time, people with serious mental disorders, such as psychosis, require medical treatment and medication.



WHERE WILL WE CONDUCT THE RESEARCH?

The TRANSFORM project will be conducted in two urban communities, one in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and the other in Ibadan, Nigeria. The study has several phases and in the first phase of the research, we want to understand:

- How people living in these communities understand about mental illness?
- How people use traditional and faith healers' treatment in the community?
- How traditional and faith healers and health workers identify people with serious mental disorders?
- The treatments offered by traditional and faith healers and health services in the community
- How people with mental illness experience these treatments?
- How traditional healers, health workers could work together in the community?

WHAT WILL WE DO?

After we have spoken to people in the community to understand how mental disorder is understood and treated, we will work with healers, health workers & professionals to develop training programme. This training will help traditional healers and community health workers to identify people with serious mental disorder and support them to access local mental health services.

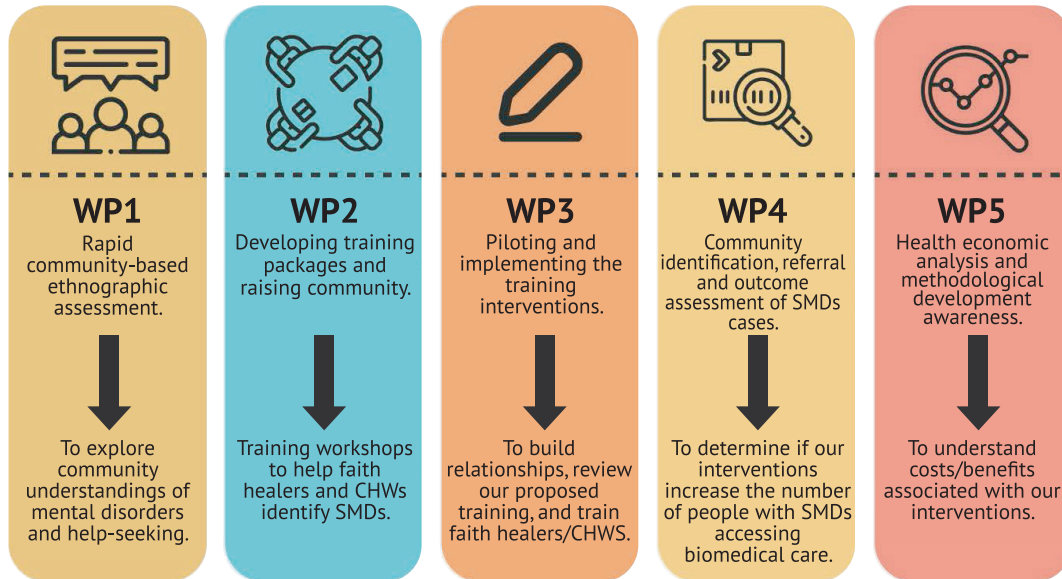


Discussion with CHWs

HOW WILL WE KNOW IF THE RESEARCH MAKES A DIFFERENCE?

After observing the current practice, we will train the local healers and health workers and we will see if more people are referred to mental health services by healers or community health workers. We will also see if the mental health condition of people referred improves after they have received medical treatment. In addition to this we will test how cost-effective our intervention is.

All of this work will be done in 5 stages, called 'work packages' (WPs) as shown in the picture below.



WHO IS INVOLVED?

TRANSFORM is a partnership between the University of Warwick, UK, The University of Ibadan, Nigeria, and the Telepsychiatry Research and Innovation Network (TRIN), Bangladesh.



Professor Swaran Singh
Principal Investigator
TRANSFORM Project



Professor Olayinka O. Omigbodun
Principal Investigator
TRANSFORM Nigeria Site



Dr. Tanjir Rashid Soron
Principal Investigator
TRANSFORM Bangladesh Site

This project has been developed through detailed discussion with the above research teams and community leaders, community health workers and healers in both sites.



Technical Committee Meeting

WHAT IS THE LATEST?

In Ibadan, we are beginning data collection for Work Package 1 (WP1) to explore communities' views of mental health and where and how people seek help.

In Dhaka, Bangladesh, we are training our research team and finalized plans for data collection. A field office within the Korail slum has been rented. Meetings with local community advisory group and other committees are taking place. The team are visiting the Korail community and getting training from national and international experts.

If you want to get involved or ask questions, please get in touch with the Dhaka team led by Dr. Tanjir Rashid Soron MD.



Meeting with local CHWs

CONTACT US

Telepsychiatry Research and Innovation Network Ltd.

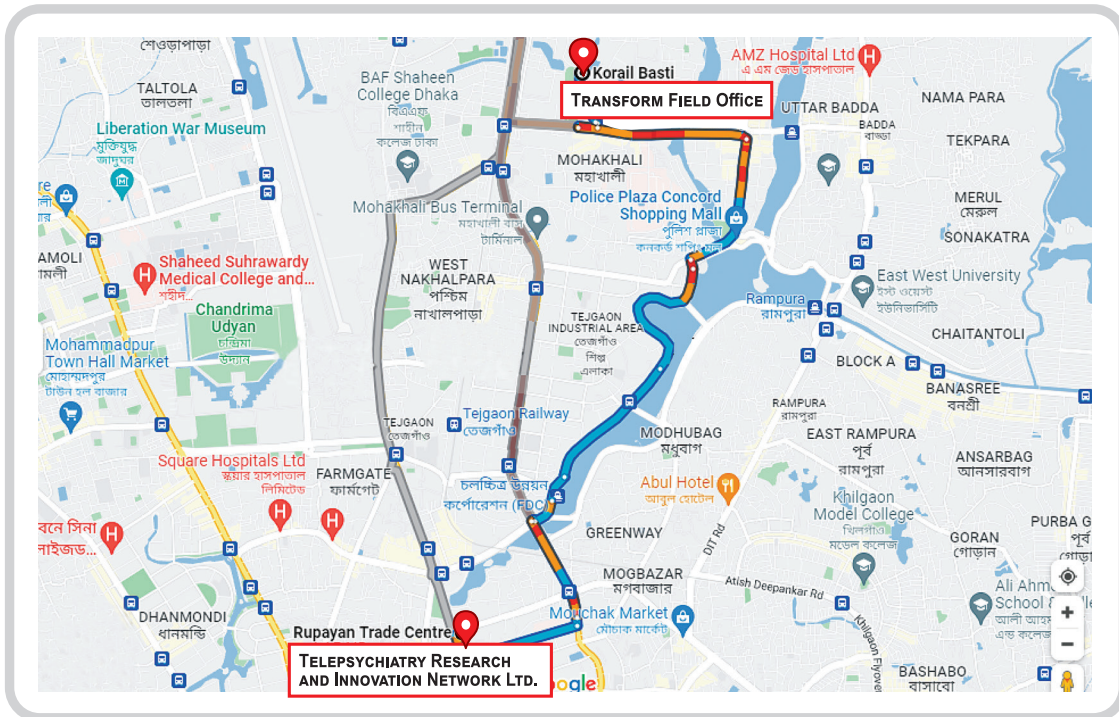
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