

Imbuto Foundation, on Tuesday, May 31 launched 'Baho Neza', a Mental Health Matters Project' to address mental health issues that lead to illness in six districts of Rwanda.

The three-year project was launched in the Nyaruguru district; and will be piloted in 6 targeted districts of Nyamasheke, Musanze, Bugesera, Nyagatare, and Gasabo Districts.

The project is aimed at increasing awareness of mental health within the community, in order to shift mindsets towards a positive outlook on mental health as well as feeling comfortable while focusing on the families in society.

Ndejuru Radeconde, who represented Imbuto Foundation, said that the Rwandan community was devastated by the effects of the Genocide against the Tutsi and the social situation in general.

"The history of our country shows that the communities are devastated by the effects of the genocide and the social situation in general," he said.

Adding, that is why since 1994 the country has made efforts to rebuild the family and the country as a whole. So the family is the foundation of Rwandans, it is the foundation of our country. "

He noted that for the past 20 years, the Imbuto Foundation has been committed to contributing to the development and well-being of the community, through the community and all walks of life.

She has returned to various Imbuto Foundation programs that include caring for a pregnant mother and child until she is six years old through a child development program; youth and adolescent care programs; of youth and of family care in general.

"So Baho Neza is a program that promotes mental health, starting with caring for the health of the mother and child and having a strong and secure family," Radeconde further explained.

Some of the problems caused by mental health include family conflicts, neglect of children, child abuse, early teenage pregnancies, domestic violence and sexual violence, and the use of drugs among the youth to mention but a few.

How the project will be implemented

According to the foundation, the project will be implemented through awareness campaigns in different sectors of the region, in which it will operate, with the objective of changing attitudes towards mental health and making it clear that access to these services is not a shame.

These services will be availed in the form of group consultation and individual consultation in a safe space that the patient chooses.

The project will also provide mental health services at health centers with a special focus on Child & Maternal Health, as the first stage of human life.

Special attention will also be given to high-risk levels for traumatic stress disorder as well as other mental health maladies.

Some of the residents who have experienced mental health disorders expressed their dissatisfaction saying more needs to be done.

Uwineza Chantal, who got pregnant at an early age and left school after suffering from anxiety disorders, pointed out that she gets frustrated when she looks at her former classmates going to school.

“If I were studying I would have a better future ’. So we, the youth, need help to heal these wounds. ” She noted.

Ingabire Assumpta, the Minister of State in charge of Social Affairs, called on the people during the launch to participate in different programs of the Mental Health Project for their own benefit.

“Any person who is diagnosed with a specific illness will be referred to a specialist. It’s about participating and being available,” She added