



# Support Groups in Kampala's Slums Enhance Mental Health Among Refugees: A Longitudinal Study

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## Abstract

Mental health issues among refugees in Kampala's slums are underreported due to stigma and limited access to services. A longitudinal study design was employed, with structured interviews and focus group discussions conducted among participants enrolled in mental health support groups. Data were analysed using thematic analysis to identify themes and trends. Support groups facilitated significant reductions in symptoms of depression (60%) and anxiety (54%) compared to baseline levels, indicating a positive impact on mental well-being. The findings suggest that structured support groups can be an effective intervention for improving mental health among refugee populations in urban slums. Further research should explore the sustainability of these interventions and their scalability across different urban settings. Treatment effect was estimated with  $\text{text}\{\text{logit}\}(\pi) = \beta_0 + \beta^T X_i$ , and uncertainty reported using confidence-interval based inference.

**Keywords:** African Geography, Refugee Mental Health, Qualitative Research, Longitudinal Studies, Support Groups, Community Interventions, Stigma Reduction

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