

# REPORT ON NGOMAHURU PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL IN MASVINGO

## 20 DECEMBER 2017

---

### **BACKGROUND**

The hospital was built in 1925 by the Dutch Church initially for leprosy patients. The invent of Dobson, a drug which cures leprosy led to the decline of leprosy patients from 300 to a mere 10 and the hospital was left vacant. Between 1945-1968, the hospital was converted into a Sartorial for tuberculosis patients. In 1968, the facility was left vacant again after the decentralization and discoveries of modern treatments which allowed the patients to be treated at home.

Psychiatric patients were inducted in 1969 to date and since the facility was not designed specifically for the group of people and infrastructural concentration are haphazard. The facility was not designed for psychiatric patients and is not a safe place for the patients and staff and this is characterized by the record number of suicides and absconding of patients.

The hospital is characterized in 3 special wards. The Acute ward with an admission of mild cases. The Mentally retarded ward which admits down syndromes and other related cases. The psychotic geriatric ward which covers severe patients. The institute is the second in the country after the Engutsheni in Bulawayo. After rehabilitation, patients are placed in a Half Way Village home to further access their progress and harnessing the skills.

The hospital has a total of 176 patients out of 300, 38 are female and admission is 18 years and above.

### **CHALLENGES**

Ngomahuru Hospital is operating at a dismal 10% and the hospital's outlook is presentable and modern the inside is pathetic and it's like a mortuary than a hospital which rehabilitation center. The hospital relies on government budget allocations and the center only received a merger \$27 000 and the amount does not serve the heavy purpose of the hospital's needs.

The hospital is detached from civilization and road network is poor, though the hospital boasts of a state of the art off road vehicles, fuel shortages is a major challenge. Warrapp Engineering Company in Workington Harare, donated 4000L Fuel tanks but the center failed to fund the calibration of the tanks so they can start utilizing the equipment.

Solidament Organization donated 2000L Jojo tanks for water but it's currently not operational for the center failed to raise fund for setting up. Shortages of resources at the facility is dragging quality service provision to the patients

1 A refrigerator to store the patients medicines
2 an easy to clean flooring
3 Clothing
4 Linen
5 Blankets
6 Medicines i.e. anti-psychotic medicines, analgesic to sedate, medical sundries e.g. bandages, dressing solutions
7 Office stationery
8 Beds
9 Well balanced nutritious meals

Absconding of patients is a critical challenge and this is due to lack of trained security personnel at the institute. Last two months the institute lost two patients, one from drowning of a patient in Tokwe River and another who committed suicide in the nearby bush.

A cyclone hit the hospital last rainy season and destroyed staff quarters, administration offices and part of the wards. The staffs are squashing in so friendly housing which was built in 1925 which is not conducive to their wellbeing as some have families.

The hospital still uses furniture and administration equipment installed in 1925 and this has jeopardized progress and efficiency and is in shortage of female friendly wards and sanitary ware. Since the hospital has its own farm where they produce their own maize for mealie meal, major challenge is on relish and this pose a malnutrition deficiency as the staff end up serving same type of relish every day.

### **EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES**

Since the hospital has a wing of teaching and recruiting attaches, they suffer in delivery as they have old and outdated library lacking relevant books which hinders full integration of the psychiatric knowledge to students on attachment .An empty library in need of stocking of relevant books. The educational department is appealing for a projector and writing pads.

## **SUCCESS STORIES**

Amidst the hopelessness and darkness, the hospital has recorded success stories and below is a list of the stories which has kept the hospital going;

- 540 Horse powered generator which is fully operational
- Good working environment for the staff
- All Toyota Land Cruisers are in good working condition
- Committed workforce which works under a great deal of minimalism
- A fully operational grinding mill
- A reliable farming department , this was made possible by Solidament Organization which donated drip irrigation equipment and water pumps
- A state of the art laundry equipment which requires setting up
- An incinerator facility
- Medicine San Frontier (MSF) donated a vehicle and 1000L of fuel
- A pharmacy in need of medicines
- National Parks And Wildlife donated two buffaloes
- Solidament Organization donated water pumps and irrigation equipment
- Social welfare donated food stuffs
- Zimra donated food stuffs
- Christian Citizen Initiative donated food stuffs
- Local churches

## **LESSONS LEARNT**

To achieve set target goals requires team work and togetherness and this was proved by IROMHA's team which worked tirelessly to bring about a desired result. The Ngomahuru visit was an eye opener and game changer in erasing fine lines between misunderstanding of the set groups to be helped and being on the ground with the people who are in need of the help. The visit ensured that on the ground participation plays a big role in reporting back on the reality of the situation so as to formulate plans on how the Organization can do to further the harmonization of donations which are strategic and proper.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

As a recommendation, IROMHA with the help of the CoC Department must with continued effort partner with the rehabilitation center as to minimize the burden characterized by the hospital at the present moment. The organization can volunteer to spend time at the hospital, identifying needs and do the best in meeting them. The facility will do with a lot of spiritual help as some patients are in the situation due to spiritual errors and abuse that happened to them.

## CONCLUSION

2018 Is a good year laced with a lot of philanthropy work and it will be vital for the organization to gear up awareness programs to raise more funds for Ngomahuru Mental Institute. The hospital's needs are much that with the little that we put together goes a long way in alleviating problems and needs at the institute



*I Reach Out My Hand  
Africa*