



ADVOCACY OUTCOME BRIEF

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MOMBASA COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COUNCIL

2025



Documenting CEFRESA's Strategic Advocacy and Policy Engagement Process

A Foundational Milestone for Mental Health Governance

This Advocacy Outcome Brief documents the results of strategic civil society engagement, evidence-driven lobbying, and sustained policy advocacy that led to the formal gazettement of the Mombasa County Mental Health Council on 4th July 2025. This milestone marks a critical foundational step in strengthening mental health governance and establishing the first multi-sectoral structure mandated to guide coordination, policy alignment, and structured oversight of mental health interventions within the county.

This achievement reflects a deliberate shift from fragmented and under-coordinated mental health responses toward a more structured, rights-based, and system-oriented approach. It aligns Mombasa with the Mental Health Act (2018), the Kenya Mental Health Policy (2021–2030), and Article 43 of the Constitution of Kenya on the right to the highest attainable standard of health, signaling a new phase of institutional commitment to strengthening mental health leadership and accountability.

Emerging Mental Health Priorities in Mombasa County

Evidence generated through CEFRESA-led research and community engagement has provided a clearer picture of the mental health realities in Mombasa County. Specifically, the Rapid Assessment on the Status of School Mental Health Promotion conducted in August 2024 across 30 primary and secondary schools in Mombasa County, and the Needs Assessment on Mental Wellness for Students in Higher Learning Education conducted in May 2025, revealed a growing pattern of emotional distress, psychosocial challenges, and unmet mental health needs among learners and young people.

Respondents in both learning environments consistently reported limited access to structured and predictable mental health support services, emphasizing an urgent need for coordinated and system-wide response mechanisms within the county. These findings highlight emerging mental health priorities that demand clearer leadership, enhanced coordination, and an integrated governance framework capable of systematically addressing the needs and expectations of the people of Mombasa.

The establishment of the County Mental Health Council, therefore, represents a strategic response to these identified needs, creating a formal governance mechanism capable of guiding structured attention, strengthening policy alignment, and fostering coordinated, county-wide mental health programming that reflects community realities.

Gazzette Notice for Establishment of Mombasa Mental Health Council

4th July, 2025

THE KENYA GAZETTE

GAZETTE NOTICE NO. 8902

THE MENTAL HEALTH ACT

(Cap. 248)

COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF MOMBASA

APPOINTMENT

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred by section 2E. of the Mental Health Act, the County Executive Committee Member, Department of Health Services, County Government of Mombasa appoints the following as Chairperson and Members of County Mental Health Council as follows:

County Director of Health; Chairperson

Chairperson to the County Education Board;

County Mental Health Co-ordinator Mombasa;

Salim Said Mohamed (Dr.)—Psychiatrist representing Professional Body;

Mary Moige Omboga —Representing Caregiver Body;

Abdalla Ahmed Badrus—Program Director, MEWA Health and Harm Reduction; and

Soud Tenga—Technical Lead Clinical Psychologist Mental Health Innovations and Research (MEHIR).

for a period of three (3) years, with effect from the 26th June, 2025.

MR/7783061 **SWABAH A. OMAR,**
CECM Health Services.

GAZETTE NOTICE NO. 8903

THE CONSTITUTION OF KENYA

No.	Facility
1.	Qarsahama Dispensary
2.	Sake Dispensary
3.	Elele Dispensary
4.	Qalanqalesa Dispensary
5.	Dawder Dispensary
6.	Kalicha Dispensary
7.	Darwed Dispensary
8.	Didkuro Dispensary

Dated the 30th
MR/7775552

GAZETTE NOTICE
THE PHYS

CO
COMPLETION OF

Plan No.
E21/2025/01
E21/2025/02

CEFRESA'S STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND POLICY INFLUENCE IN MENTAL HEALTH GOVERNANCE

The establishment of the Mombasa County Mental Health Council has been significantly informed by the strategic engagement of the Center for Resilience and Sustainable Africa (CEFRESA), a women-led organization committed to advancing community wellbeing, health equity, and inclusive development across coastal counties and beyond.

CEFRESA's legitimacy in engaging in mental health governance is grounded in its sustained presence within schools, communities, and youth spaces, and its track record in evidence-based programming and policy advocacy. The organization works at the intersection of community realities and institutional reform, positioning it as a credible actor in elevating locally grounded concerns into structured policy dialogue.

CEFRESA's technical advocacy contribution has included:



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The gazetted seven-member Mental Health Council now provides Mombasa County with a formal governance platform mandated to:

- Advise the County Executive Committee Member (CECM) for Health on mental health priorities and strategic direction.
- Support coordination of mental health initiatives across sectors and institutions.
- Guide the domestication and alignment of national mental health policies within county
- Strengthen structured planning, standards development, and evidence-informed programming.
- Promote preventive, community-centered, and child-focused mental health approach-

The Council serves as the anchor structure through which mental health governance, coordination, and system development will be progressively strengthened in Mombasa County.

PREPARING FOR EFFECTIVE OPERATIONALIZATION

With the newly established Council, the immediate phase now calls for the creation of an enabling environment to support its effective functioning. These forward-looking priorities represent areas where coordinated actors, including civil society, institutional partners, and development stakeholders, can align their efforts to strengthen the Council's operational foundation.

Key priorities include:

01

Strengthening mental health data systems and establishing county baselines

Aligning stakeholders to the Council's mandate and coordination pathways

02

03

Developing structured mechanisms for joint planning and engagement

Mobilizing partnerships and resources for system strengthening

04

05

Consolidating evidence and creating accessible knowledge tools

Building community awareness and strengthening mental health literacy

06

These actions will support the Council to begin its work within a prepared, coordinated, and evidence-informed ecosystem.



CALL TO ACTION

The establishment of the Mombasa County Mental Health Council represents a decisive first step in strengthening mental health governance. CEFRESA calls upon donors, policymakers, institutional partners, and communities to collaboratively invest in the successful operationalization and long-term effectiveness of the Council.

Stakeholders are invited to support:

1

Development of coordinated mental health systems and governance mechanisms

2

Expansion of child and adolescent mental health programming

3

Strengthening data systems, capacity building, and policy implementation

4

Sustainable investment in structured mental health infrastructure

Through collective commitment and evidence-informed collaboration, Mombasa County can progressively build a resilient, inclusive, and responsive mental health system that prioritizes the well-being of its children, youth, and wider population, while recognizing the critical role of civil society actors such as CEFRESA in supporting sustainable systems transformation.