CEHURD
social justice in health

TERMS OF REFERENCE

RETAINER PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES TO CEHURD STAFF AND ITS CLIENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

The Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD) is a mainstream legal and human rights indigenous Non-Governmental Organisation established in 2009 to advance social justice and human rights in health. The organisation addresses social injustices, inequalities and health rights violations in health systems and other sectors which impact health outcomes for women, girls and other vulnerable communities. We advance health rights of vulnerable communities through litigation, advocacy, research and empowerment, with a goal of realising equitable health and human rights for all. In 2020, and as part of CEHURD's litigation work, the organisation established a comprehensive legal aid clinic that offers pro bono legal aid services to individuals who suffer health rights violations. These are mainly individuals who suffer multiple vulnerabilities. The legal aid services include legal information, advice, representation, mediation, referrals and related support to people whose health rights have been violated or who face barriers to justice. This work enables the institution to document and handle several cases concerning violence, maternal and child health, access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) information and services, stigma and discrimination, child protection, detention, and other health related disputes.

The nature of this work requires CEHURD staff and case handlers such as trained paralegals to listen to, document and respond to highly distressing experiences. Repeated exposure to traumatic narratives, demanding caseloads, difficult hearings, secondary trauma and the emotional demands of client care may adversely affect the mental health and wellbeing of staff and other case handlers for CEHURD. CEHURD's clients also experience fear, grief, shame, anger, trauma, isolation, hopelessness or other forms of psychological and social distress while pursuing justice or accessing services.

CEHURD therefore intends to engage a suitably qualified psychosocial professional through a retainer arrangement to provide confidential, rights-based and trauma-informed psychosocial support services to staff, case handlers, volunteers and eligible clients. The assignment will strengthen individual and organisational wellbeing while ensuring that support is delivered ethically, safely and without compromising the legal functions of CEHURD and the rights and confidentiality of clients.

2. OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of the retainer assignment is to enable CEHURD staff and clients access professional psychosocial support when they need it in a confidential, respectful and empowering way. The psychosocial services should aim to promote the mental and social well-being as well as resilience and safety of those served, with overall improvement of their health outcomes and well-being.

The specific objectives are;

a. To assess the psychosocial support needs, stressors, risks and existing coping mechanisms of CEHURD's staff starting with those who work on legal aid matters.

b. To provide individualized and, where appropriate, group psychosocial support to CEHURD staff and clients.
c. To strengthen CEHURD staff knowledge of psychological first aid, trauma-informed communication, self-care, peer support, boundaries and safe referral.
d. To develop an internal psychosocial support and referral framework for CEHURD, including psychosocial assessment, documentation and referral tools.
e. To provide recommendations on an ongoing basis, for organizational measures that reduce burnout, secondary trauma and other psychosocial risks associated with CEHURD's work.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 Inception and needs assessment

The Psychosocial expert will hold an inception meeting with the CEHURD to discuss as well as identify and review relevant documents, including staff-care procedures, safeguarding policies, referral directories, workload information and any previous wellbeing assessments to understand staff and client psychosocial needs.

3.2 Direct psychosocial support

The expert will provide, or arrange through an approved referral network (especially that CEHURD clients are spread across the country), appropriate psychosocial support through modalities agreed upon with CEHURD. These may include structured individualised crisis and/or supportive psychosocial support including counselling sessions, psychological first aid, facilitated peer-support sessions, group debriefing where clinically and ethically appropriate, wellbeing check-ins, stress-management support and referrals for other relevant specialised care.

3.3 Capacity strengthening

The expert will facilitate practical sessions for staff on recognising signs of distress, responding safely and respectfully, avoiding re-traumatisation, maintaining professional boundaries, managing vicarious trauma, using psychological first aid principles, supporting colleagues and making referrals. The sessions will be tailored to CEHURD's operating context and needs.

3.4 Referral and safeguarding pathway

The expert will map suitable social agencies, public, private and community-based referral options, including services for mental health, medical care, protection, gender-based violence, child protection, disability support and emergency response, as relevant to the CEHURD's client's location.

4. DELIVERABLES

- **Psychosocial needs-assessment brief:** An anonymised summary of key stressors, support needs, existing strengths, service gaps and recommendations for strengthening psychosocial support for CEHURD staff and clients.
- **Service Provision Reports:** Monthly reports detailing the number of staff and clients served, types of services provided, and outcomes.
- **Client Progress Reports:** Opening up individual client files and ensuring that progress reports for clients receiving ongoing psycho social support are on file.
- **Training Materials:** Develop teaching materials on Psychosocial support for staff providing legal aid/pro bono support to clients. The materials should also be able to support capacity building for all staff on psychosocial support for each other targeting supervisors, staff in HR Office and those on the Rewards and Disciplinary Committee.

5. METHODOLOGY

- **Client Engagement and empowerment:** Use client-centred approaches to build trust and rapport. The retainer service is expected to use a participatory, confidential and trauma-informed approach. An empowering approach is desired to enable staff and clients be able to cope and restore their confidence and resilience beyond the service period.
- **Evidence-based Practices:** Apply evidence-based psychosocial support techniques and recognised psychological first aid and mental-health and psychosocial support principles, including humane, supportive and practical assistance for people experiencing serious distress.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Ensure services are culturally appropriate and sensitive to clients' backgrounds.
- **Confidentiality:** Maintain strict confidentiality of client information.

- **Risk minimization:** Minimise the risk of re-traumatisation of staff and clients while providing services and ensure that mitigation measures are in place in situations where staff and clients are re-traumatised.
- **Respect for rights:** The expert should be able to manage urgent risk, safeguarding concerns, confidentiality, data protection, remote or telephone support, client consent, conflicts of interest, professional boundaries and after-hours emergencies when required.
- **Individualisation:** Each person is unique and therefore must be supported based on their unique situation.
- **Non-judgemental and non-discrimination approach:** the expert must use a non-judgemental and non-discrimination approach, recognising that CEHURD's clients suffer multiple vulnerabilities and may have been judged or discriminated in many ways that could affected their ability to cope with their situations and seeking for redress.

6. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The consultant may be an individual professional or a suitably constituted psychosocial agency firm/organization. The successful applicant should demonstrate:

- A relevant advanced qualification in Psychology, Guidance & Counselling, clinical psychology, mental-health practice, social work, psychotherapy or related field.
- A minimum of 5 years of relevant experience providing psychosocial support, counselling, psychological first aid, trauma-informed care or mental health interventions and staff wellbeing services.
- Knowledge of confidentiality, informed consent, safeguarding, referral systems, data protection and ethical practice.
- Demonstrated understanding of Ugandan counselling ethics, confidentiality standards, and data protection principles.
- Familiarity with Uganda's mental-health and social protection service landscape and the ability to establish reliable referral linkages.
- Ability to work in a gender-sensitive, disability-inclusive, culturally responsive and non-discriminatory manner.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills with a fair understanding of the local languages in the target districts.
- Affiliation/membership to a relevant professional association is an added advantage.

8. DURATION

The retainer service will last for twelve (12) months, with the possibility of extension based on performance.

9. APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested experts or firms/organisations should submit:

i. A brief technical proposal demonstrating an understanding of the assignment and describing the proposed methodology (based on own expertise), ethical safeguards, work and support modalities.
ii. A current curriculum vitae for the lead expert and any proposed team members, including relevant qualifications, professional registration where applicable and at least two referees aligned with the nature of assignment.
iii. A financial proposal presented in Uganda Shillings, clearly separating professional fees, applicable taxes, and reimbursable costs.
iv. At least two examples of comparable work, or links to relevant non-confidential reports where available.
v. Recommendations with contact details from at least two professional referees, aligned with the nature of the assignment.
vi. Copy of Tax Compliance Certificate (TCC).
vii. TIN Number, NIN Number or Business Registration Number (BRN) for firms and organisations.
viii. Any other relevant information supporting the application.

Proposals should be submitted by email to **support@cehurd.org** with the subject line **"Application: Psychosocial Support for CEHURD"** not later than **26th October 2026**.

Only shortlisted applicants will be contacted. CEHURD reserves the right not to make an award or to request clarification from applicants where necessary.

Data Protection and Privacy Notice:

By participating in this call, you consent to the collection, use, and processing of your personal data by the Center for Health, Human Rights and Development (CEHURD). Your data will be used solely for the purpose of evaluating this call, as well as related follow-up communications.