

FIMA MindCare Project: Implementation Report on Promoting Mental Health in Muslim Communities

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Abstract

Mental health challenges are a growing global concern, and in Muslim communities, barriers include stigma, limited access to culturally aligned care, and insufficient integration of faith-based coping mechanisms. The FIMA MindCare Initiative, approved by the Federation of Islamic Medical Associations (FIMA) in August 2024, offers a culturally and faith-informed framework for mental health promotion. This report outlines the program's leadership, core components, project milestones, resources, achievements, and next steps. Early implementation shows progress in awareness-building, stigma reduction, and youth engagement. The initiative's holistic approach positions faith as both a preventive and therapeutic resource and provides a model for sustainable mental health promotion in Muslim communities worldwide.

Introduction

Mental health challenges affect individuals, families, and communities worldwide (World Health Organization [WHO], 2025, n.d.; World Mental Health Report, 2022). In Muslim communities, stigma, misconceptions about the causes of mental illness (such as weakness of iman or punishment from Allah), limited access to culturally aligned services, and insufficient integration of faith-based coping mechanisms exacerbate mental health gaps (alHarbi et al., 2023; Elfattah, n.d.). The FIMA MindCare Initiative addresses these gaps by integrating contemporary mental health science with Islamic psychology, ethics, and spirituality, positioning faith as both a preventive and therapeutic resource (Sumaia

Almajri et al., 2025). The initiative aims to increase mental health awareness in the Muslim community, reduce stigma, and empower youth as proactive champions of mental wellness (Zulfeqar, 2024). It also aims to revive the forgotten legacy of Muslims as pioneers of modern psychiatry and psychotherapy, which embraces a holistic approach to the mind, body, and soul (Sultana, n.d.; Sumaia Almajri et al., 2025).

Program Leadership and Coordination

The FIMA MindCare Project was proposed by the Kenya Association of Muslim Medical Professionals (KAMMP) in August 2024 at the FIMA council meeting in Cape Town, South Africa. The initiative was unanimously

approved by the FIMA council, which appointed KAMMP to spearhead its implementation. In October 2024, KAMMP partnered with the British Islamic Medical Association (BIMA) and the Australian Islamic Medical Association (AIMA) to establish a technical committee to guide and coordinate the project's implementation.

Program Components

The FIMA MindCare Initiative is structured around key components that promote mental health awareness, capacity-building, and collaboration across the Muslim healthcare community (*World Mental Health Report*, 2022). Each component plays a distinct role in fostering knowledge exchange, empowering youth, and strengthening culturally grounded approaches to mental well-being. The program's three main components are:

1. *Educational Webinars and Symposia*: Targeting healthcare providers, community leaders, and the general public to improve mental health literacy.
2. *Youth Engagement Programs*: Empowering young people to participate in mental health promotion and innovation
3. *Annual Global Mindsavers Workshop*: A platform to unite healthcare workers worldwide, strengthen collaboration, raise awareness, and make a lasting impact on the mental well-being of Muslim communities worldwide.

Project Milestones (August 2024 – August 2025)

- **August 2024**: Proposal presented to FIMA Council.
- **October 2024**: Establishment of the FIMA MindCare Committee, including KAMMP, BIMA, and AIMA.
- **November 2024**: Adaptation of the BIMA Mind Savers workshop, focusing on the “Five Pillars of Better Mental Health” for Muslims.
- **December 2024**: Program name changed from FIMA Save Mind to FIMA MindCare, emphasizing proactive mental wellness rather than illness.
- **April–June 2025**: Design and finalization of the FIMA MindCare logo, symbolizing the integration of the heart (qalb) and brain (‘aql) to reflect interconnected emotional, spiritual, and intellectual health.
- **October 2024–August 2025**:
 - BIMA pilot (August–September 2024)
 - BIMA nationwide rollout (November 2024)

- AIMA soft launch (July 2025)
- KAMMP dry run (August 2025)

Resources and Implementation Strategies

The implementation of the FIMA MindCare Project is grounded in community participation, collaboration, and digital innovation (Ezekwe, 2025). Volunteers are organized into three categories based on expertise: those with a mental health background serve as facilitators, providing technical guidance; those with a general health background serve as assistants; and non-health volunteers support mobilization, logistics, coordination, and social media engagement. This structure promotes inclusivity, efficiency, and sustainability by enabling diverse professionals to contribute to mental health promotion.

Partnerships with local mosques, Islamic centers, and health organizations strengthen community ownership and ensure that activities are delivered in culturally and spiritually sensitive settings (King et al., 2017). These collaborations helped reduce stigma and foster open dialogue about mental well-being.

To enhance coordination and global outreach, the initiative also uses digital platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, and social media for meetings, training, and campaigns. Reflecting growing evidence, digital tools effectively expand access, improve mental health literacy, promote behavioral change, and support sustained positive health behaviors (Coelho et al., 2025).

Achievements and Progress

The first phase of the FIMA MindCare Initiative achieved several key milestones. The Mindsavers workshops were successfully piloted and adapted to diverse cultural and linguistic contexts, ensuring local relevance and acceptability. Collaboration among FIMA and the three member countries was significantly strengthened, resulting in a growing network of culturally competent mental health champions who advocate for wellness across regions.

A notable accomplishment was the design and adoption of the FIMA MindCare logo and branding, which symbolize the harmony among the emotional, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions of mental wellness (Sumaia Almajri et al., 2025). This visual identity reinforced the initiative's holistic, preventive philosophy.

Next Steps

- Integration of team leads from various IMAs into a shared digital platform.
- Continuous volunteer mobilization and capacity-building.
- Launch of Phase 2, featuring educational webinars, symposia, and youth empowerment programs.
- Scaling up of the Global Mindsavers Workshop.

Conclusion

The FIMAMindCare Initiative demonstrates an innovative, culturally aligned approach to promoting mental health within Muslim communities. Early implementation shows progress in awareness-raising, stigma reduction, and youth engagement. The initiative's holistic model provides a sustainable framework for faith-based mental health promotion across FIMA member countries.

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