The focus of this thesis work is to increase mental health services to community members who are unable to access the wide-range of services at higher levels of care. The current situation of inequitable distribution of human resources in many developing countries calls for collaboration between formal and informal health providers. Targeting informal health providers such as community health workers, traditional and faith healers to provide appropriate interventions for patients with common mental disorders could particularly reduce health care provider to patient ratio at the health facility level and serve as a link between undetected mental health needs at the community level and provision of within-reach services. It could also result into fewer numbers of patients with severe mental illnesses at higher levels of care.

Christine Musyimi is a mental health researcher at Africa Mental Health Foundation. She has written extensively on the challenges and opportunities available to initiate collaborative processes between formal and informal health sectors (traditional and faith healers) including introduction of evidence-based approaches in the latter sector. She has published this research work in peer-reviewed journals and books. She has also received grants as the Principal Investigator from Grand Challenges Canada and Grand Challenges Africa. Her current work extends beyond informal health providers to non-mental health specialists in community settings in Kenya.

MENTAL HEALTH CARE IN RURAL KENYA

Improving quality of life and mental health through evidence-based mental health interventions in the informal sector

Christine Wayua Musyimi