



**TESTING THE DRPC'S
PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID &
PLAY-LEARNING (PFA&PL)
THERAPEUTIC MANUAL FOR
HOSPITAL PLAY SPACES AND
ECCD SUPPORT SERVICES IN
CONFLICT AFFECTED AREAS
IN BORNO STATE 2022-2024**

Pilot Performance Assessment

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OUTLINE

- The dRPC's Psychological First Aid & Play-Learning (PFA&PL) Therapeutic Manual – testing the Manual
- The dRPC's Psychological First Aid & Play-Learning (PFA&PL) Therapeutic Manual
- Key Activities to deliver Psychological First Aid & Play-Learning (PFA&PL) in Borno state 2022-2024
- The dRPC showcased the Psychological First Aid & Play-Learning (PFA&PL) project at the Play and Childcare within Children's Hospital - OMEP National Conference
- The dRPC showcased the Psychological First Aid & Play-Learning (PFA&PL) project at the National Dialogue on Play-based learning, February 2023
- Photo Story
- Lessons Learned
- Findings and Lessons learned
- Next steps and implications for scaling the Psychological First Aid & Play-Learning (PFA&PL) Manual

The dRPC's Psychological First Aid & Play-Learning (PFA&PL) Therapeutic Manual – testing the Manual



TESTING THE MANUAL

- The dRPC's 2021 study on in-patient hospitalization of children in conflict affected areas in Northeast Nigeria identified 5 causes for hospitalization
- In order of importance –
 - 1) server acute malnutrition;
 - 2) diseases preventable by vaccines;
 - 3) malaria;
 - 4) sickle cell diseases; and
 - 5) physical injury due to accidents and/or deliberate harm - key drivers of hospitalization in paediatric wards of secondary and tertiary facilities



State specialist hospital, Zango, Maiduguri, Borno state. Photo credit: dRPC Nigeria

TESTING THE MANUAL

- The average period of hospitalization was 7 to 10 days with 12% of patients hospitalized for 4 to 6 weeks
- The average time for outpatient children was 4.5 hours
- The dRPC designed a pilot to test the Play-based Therapeutic Manual using play as a vehicle for emotional and physical healing for in-patient children
- The project was launched in Borno State in January 2022



Facilitator assisting learners one-on-one at Ajari NFLC, Monguno LGA, Borno state. Photo credit: David Ahanor

THE dRPC'S PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID & PLAY-LEARNING (PFA&PL) THERAPEUTIC MANUAL



THE dRPC'S PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID & PLAY-LEARNING (PFA&PL) THERAPEUTIC MANUAL

- Psychological First Aid & Play-Learning (PFA&PL) in child health is a supportive, evidence-informed approach used to help children manage distress immediately following a crisis or traumatic event, it includes play learning components from the Integrated ECCD policy
- The Manual called for Playrooms, trained medical and support staff, and familial care giver involvement
- Manual was based on the research finding which showed that sick children in conflict affected areas need a safe space to recover through play and learning
- The dRPC established collaborative working relationship with the State Ministry of Health signing an MOU to implement the project
- Implementation timeline to test the Manual – 2022-2024



Child Friendly space

KEY ACTIVITIES TO DELIVER PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID & PLAY-LEARNING (PFA&PL) IN BORNO STATE 2022-2024



KEY ACTIVITIES TO DELIVER PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID & PLAY-LEARNING (PFA&PL) IN BORNO STATE

- **Inception meeting with government health sector officials**
- Securing of play spaces in the State Specialist hospital, Borno state
- Renovation of plumbing and equipping of play spaces
- Procurement of play items and materials
- Five days' capacity building training for 30 health workers of 5 government secondary and tertiary level facilities.
- Refresher Training in Q2 of year 2 to train caregivers on using play as a vehicle for Psychological, First Aid and ECCD healing
- Setting up of project monitoring committees with Monthly meetings was attended with the health sector

KEY ACTIVITIES TO DELIVER PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID & PLAY-LEARNING (PFA&PL) IN BORNO STATE

- **Age range of the children served – 60% 2-4 years; 40% 5-7 years; 10% age unknown; and 10% 7 – 10 years**
- Mean number of days of children's hospitalization – 5.5 days
- Number of hospital caregivers trained - 41
- Number of junior hospital caregivers training cascaded down to - 52

THE dRPC SHOWCASED THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID & PLAY-LEARNING (PFA&PL) PROJECT AT THE PLAY AND CHILDCARE WITHIN CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL - OMEP NATIONAL CONFERENCE





OMEP NATIONAL CONFERENCE

- The dRPC showcased the PFA&PL project at the OMEP National Conference and Workshop that held between October 19th and 21st, 2022, **THEME: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY: NEW PERSPECTIVE AND DILEMMAS**
- The panel on Play and child development
- The panel profiled the experience on the project of setting up play centres in the government Hospitals
- This was interesting to the audience as it was an eye opener into the collective responsibility of all to see that children are free and happy to thrive in whatever environment they find themselves.
- The dRPC further mentioned that it will be appropriate to establish a law or policy for children's play-spaces in the health care facilities



The dRPC panel at the OMEP National Conference, Ibadan Oyo state
Photo credit: OMEP Nigeria

THE dRPC SHOWCASED THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID & PLAY-LEARNING (PFA&PL) PROJECT AT THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON PLAY-BASED LEARNING, FEBRUARY 2023

- Panel on play-based learning in hospital settings with 4 health workers from Borno state
- Session discussed content of the training for health workers as play facilitators
- Session also discussed the dRPC's PFA&PL Manual
- Q and A around how learning from the pilot will be captured in the Manual
- Participants also called on dRPC to compare results from the Community based ECCD project where play-based learning was being implemented with results from the PFA&PL project



Team Brainstorming and Panel sessions at the National Dialogue
Photo credit: dRPC Nigeria



Cross-section of participants at the National Dialogue on Play Based learning held on the 15th February 2023.
Photo Credit: dRPC Nigeria

LESSONS LEARNED FROM TESTING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID & PLAY-LEARNING (PFA&PL) MANUAL PILOT

Assessment was conducted using appreciative inquiry methodology to identify promising practices for scaling up. Four members of the NIPSS Directorate of Research, led by Professor Musa Umar led the 3-month review:

- 1) Playrooms in hospitals are the backbone of this PFA&PF projects, but they needed to be visible to the children from their beds; in this pilot
- 2) They were not Accessing the playroom became a challenge as it had to be locked away for security purposes
- 3) By the end of year one, 100%, that is all, the play items and materials were either stolen or destroyed and had to be replaced
- 4) There was intense competition for the clean toilets and sanitation spaces provided by the playroom resulting in the hospital staff demanding use of the space for pray, toilet use and other non-paediatric purposes
- 5) Children as old as 15 years tried to access the playroom and when denied access their parents lodged formal complaints

FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM TESTING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID & PLAY-LEARNING (PFA&PL) MANUAL PILOT

- 1) 72% of parents of children accessing the playroom 3 to 5 times during hospitalization rated the impact of the time spent in the play space as contributing to the happiness, emotional health and general wellbeing of the child
- 2) 66% of all parents of children accessing the playroom 3 to 5 times during hospitalization rated the impact of the time spent in the playroom as contributing directly to the health of the child
- 3) 20% of parents also reported that the child was being discharged without making a full recovery
- 4) 59% of health worker staff trained in the project and 67% of Junior health workers trained concluded that the project had high value and contributed to the recovery of hospitalized children
- 5) The open play sessions were the most popular sessions of the children; the psychosocial drawing support sessions, and the learning through play sessions were least popular
- 6) This pilot generated a framework, steps to follow in implementing similar projects and standards for replication

NEXT STEPS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SCALING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID & PLAY-LEARNING (PFA&PL) MANUAL

1

- The Manual development and testing was supported by USAID as a pilot with learning mainstreamed. Key learnings are that:

2

- The dRPC shifts the focus of play centres from paediatric wards of tertiary and secondary facilities due to the issue of space constraints

3

- Any investment in play spaces will lead to competition and lack of cooperation from staff of specialists' hospitals; primary health care centres while also experiencing limitations of space are more receptive to partnership on play while specialist hospitals are more committed to clinical practice

4

- Play in hospitals is a new concept in Borno state. Scaling will require policy action to support such an innovative project. The state Ministries of health and education must be brought together to develop a framework and standards of practice to support scaling of this project

5

- Training for facility-based providers must be strengthened to increase knowledge, skills and commitment to play

Thank you!