

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER



Editorial Note

Dear Readers,

In this special edition, we shine a spotlight on one of the most vulnerable yet resilient segments of our society—Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). As mental health advocates, we believe that healing is not a luxury but a necessity, especially for those forced to flee their homes and lives.

The insights shared by Reverend Father Joseph Fidelis Bature remind us that the trauma faced by IDPs extends far beyond physical displacement—it seeps into the very fabric of their emotional and psychological well-being. His presentation challenged us to look beyond statistics and see the human stories: of pain, perseverance, and potential.

Also captured is the spirit of ICTMH's Mental Health Week—an inspiring blend of shared reflections, community bonding, and reaffirmation of purpose. We are deeply moved by the stories, creativity, and sincerity of our members, and we thank each of you for being part of a growing movement committed to mental health justice.

As we continue this journey, let us hold space for those in pain, lend our voices to the unheard, and remain steadfast in our call: mental health is a human right.

**Warm regards,
Ese Ogheneovo
for ICTMH**

Weekly Webinar Training

Theme: Mental Health Support for Internally Displaced Persons



In a compelling session held by the Initiative for Cognitive Therapy and Mental Health (ICTMH), Reverend Father Joseph Fidelis Bature delivered an impactful presentation on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). As a Catholic priest and clinical psychologist from Maiduguri—a region severely affected by insurgency—Fr. Bature shared his experiences and insights into the mental health struggles faced by displaced communities

The presentation introduced the MHPSS Pyramid, a layered model of intervention. It starts with basic services such as food, shelter, and hygiene, followed by community and family support, structured psychosocial programs, and specialized mental health care. Through his work at the Salama Centre and in collaboration with JDPC and Caritas Germany, Fr. Bature offers trauma therapy, counseling, and vocational training to help rebuild lives. over 3.2 million IDPs across Nigeria, particularly in the North, Fr. Bature emphasized the invisible wounds left by trauma, loss of home, and fractured social systems. Many IDPs suffer from PTSD, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse due to the dire living conditions in camps. He stressed that mental health is not merely the absence of illness, but a state of complete well-being.

Touching stories—like that of a once-prosperous onion farmer reduced to tears by hunger and helplessness—highlighted the deep emotional scars IDPs bear. Fr. Bature also addressed the national shortage of mental health professionals and the stigma surrounding mental illness, urging for grassroots-level capacity building and community-based healing.



His message was clear: mental health is a human right, and healing must be grounded in love, justice, dignity, and faith. ICTMH remains committed to promoting resilience and recovery through compassionate, inclusive support.



WEEKLY WHATSAPP INTERACTIVE SESSION



ICTMH Mental Health Week Report

Theme: Mental Health Support for Internally Displaced Persons

Date: 3rd May – 11th May 2025

Overview

We are delighted to share highlights from our recently concluded Mental Health Week 2025, themed “Mental Health Support for Internally Displaced Persons.” Held virtually via WhatsApp, the week-long event was filled with meaningful reflections, engaging activities, and heartfelt conversations centered on healing, hope, and resilience.

Motivational Monday The week began with a heartfelt message from Ms. Lizzie, encouraging participants to reflect on hope, healing, and how they could be a light to others despite their own challenges: “Even in the face of displacement, hope can still rise. Let’s be the reminder that even in the darkest places, light still lives.”

Participant Reflections:

- HAFHafsat: Emphasized starting the week with gratitude and compassion toward displaced individuals.
- Uzo: Shared how fun and laughter can offer emotional support in dark times.
- Latifat: Highlighted that being a light to others nurtures one’s own well-being.
- Victoria: Encouraged offering help to anyone in need, even if it’s just comforting words.
- Fastus: Reminded participants of the importance of prioritizing mental health and taking breaks.

Tuesday – Talk-it-Out Tuesday

Participants took part in a Mental Health Awareness Survey focused on support for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The activity encouraged honest, open conversations in a judgment-free environment. Members indicated participation by replying “DONE.”

Wednesday – Wellness Wednesday

Theme: Healing the Hidden Wounds – Mental Health for People Who’ve Lost Their Homes

Activity: The Wellness Rescue Kit

Participants imagined assembling a “Mental Health First Aid Kit” for IDPs. They shared items that could provide comfort, hope, and healing:

Sample Submissions:

- Laura: Blanket, lamp, writing material, food basket, cash gift
- Uzo: Medicines, blanket, food, money, a memorable item
- Latifat: Writing materials, calming music, handwritten card, blanket, money
- Abby, Lucia, Ruth, Pat: Shared practical and emotional support items including toiletries, clothes, food, shelter aids, medicine, and uplifting words

Thursday – Thankful Thursday

Participants reflected on gratitude in difficult circumstances, inspired by a touching real-life story from Lizzie’s visit to an IDP camp.

Reflection Prompt:

“What are you thankful for right now, no matter how small?”

Responses Included:

- Emerald: Grateful for the unexplained strength and hope
- Hafsat: Thankful for life amidst challenges
- Laura: Thanked God for healing
- Abby & Aisha: Grateful for family, good health, and divine support
- Latifat: Appreciated inner strength and supportive loved ones

Fun Friday

The day focused on planting seeds of hope, both for IDPs and within participants’ own communities. Activities were lighthearted yet purposeful, fostering joy and resilience

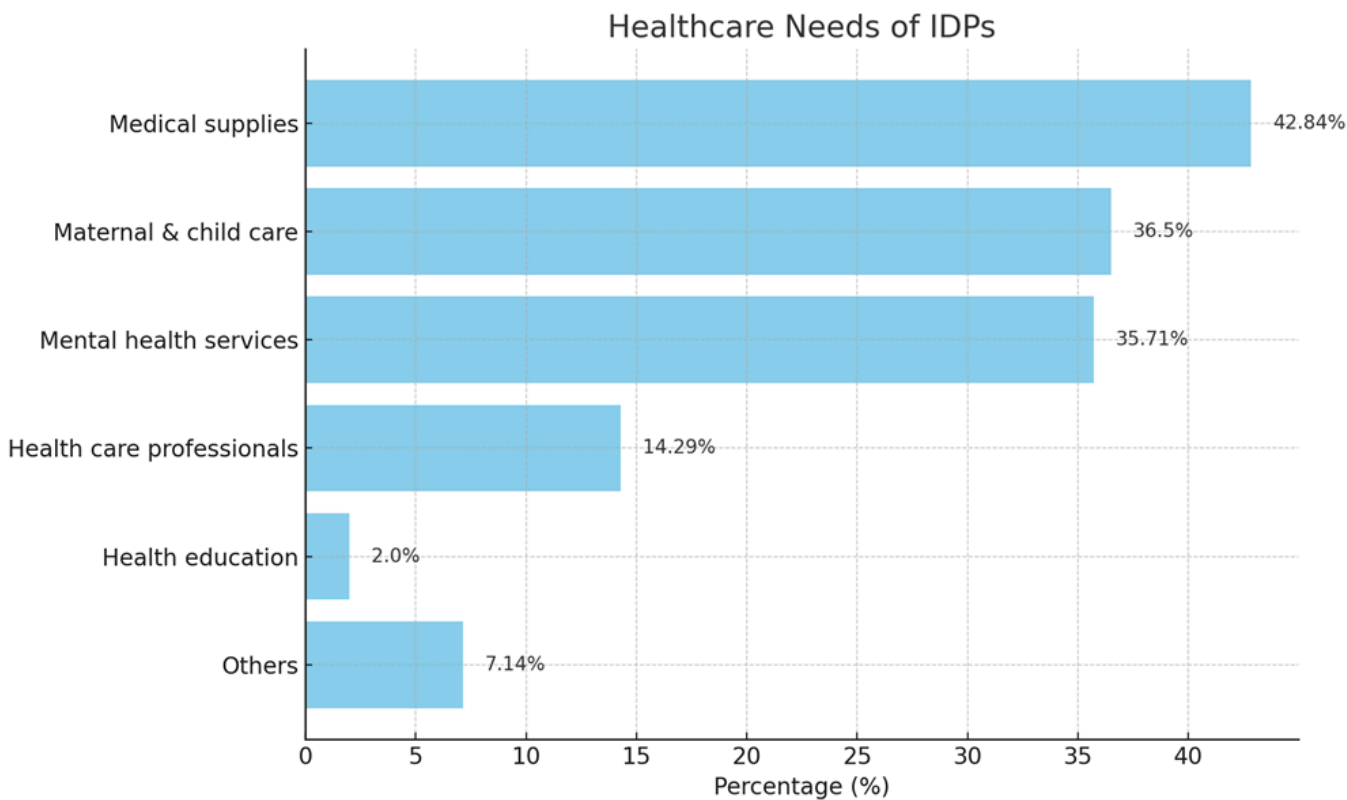
Mental Health Week may 2025 was a dynamic and transformative experience, blending motivation, creativity, and introspection.

Saturday – Self-Care Saturday

Participants were reminded of the importance of self-care, especially for those constantly caring for others. “You deserve some YOU time. If we’re always pouring out and never refilling, we’ll burn out.” – Lizzie
Encouraged activities included rest, music, good food, heartfelt conversations, and reflection.

Sunday – Reflection & Questions

The week concluded with guided reflection exercises, allowing participants to consolidate insights, lessons learned, and personal goals related to mental health and empathy for IDPs.



Data sourced from ICTMH May1 2025 Event Log and compiled by Elizabeth Idowu

RESOURCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS



Call for Journal Articles - ICTMH

ICTMH invites submissions of journal articles focused on mental health and cognitive behavioural therapies, especially those offering African-based solutions.

A list of suggested topics is available, but you're welcome to propose your own. Writing guidelines, including word counts and tips, are also provided.

Interested?

Contact Ese (07068487474) or Latifa (07064269139) on WhatsApp.

We're happy to support you through the process.

Thank you!

To get feedback or stories? Email us at enquiry@cognitiveng.org

For volunteering opportunities, join our team via social media

@www.cognitivetherapiesng

www.cognitiveng.org