



Case Studies



Research for health
in humanitarian crises

elrha



Humanitarian
innovation fund

elrha

HealthRight International expands equitable access to quality health systems for marginalized communities.



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for Health Research

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INTRODUCTION

HealthRight has experiences of adapting, implementing and evaluating SH+ and ASSIST BI interventions. Self Help Plus (SH+) is a low intensity intervention developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) for managing stress and coping with adversity. It consists of 5 audio-recorded sessions and illustrated self-help book delivered in large workshops by a minimally trained lay provider. Self-help plus builds on evidence of guided self-help interventions and modern stress management techniques. It has been shown to reduce psychological distress and prevent the onset of mental disorders. The format of SH+ makes it well-suited for use alongside other mental health interventions, as a first step in a stepped care programme, or as a community intervention delivered alongside broader community programming.

In 2015, HealthRight worked with WHO and other partners to adapt, and test self-help plus with South Sudanese refugee women in northern Uganda through uncontrolled and controlled pilots. The adaptation activities included translation of self-help plus materials in to the local language (Juba Arabic) using a standard Translation Monitoring Form developed by the WHO. Cognitive interviews were also conducted with refugee leaders and mental health professionals where the intervention content was examined in regard to comprehensibility, acceptability, relevance and completeness.

In 2019, we adapted self-help plus for use among South Sudanese refugee men in Rhino camp by including case study examples of alcohol use. We implemented the adapted version of the self-help plus intervention together with another WHO intervention called ASSIST (Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Screening Test). The ASSIST helps to identify the risk score for the alcohol and substances used by the individuals from various cultures by categorizing the ASSIST scores into a lower, moderate or high-risk category. The categorization enables that the individuals are referred to appropriate intervention commensurate to the level of risk identified. The ASSIST intervention collects information about lifetime use of substances and a range of problems associated with its use (intoxication, injecting behavior, dependent use) in past 3 months.

ASSIST was adapted to develop a brief version of it so that the intervention can be delivered by lay providers. The adaptation process included translation of the ASSIST handbook and resulted into the 11 steps of the ASSIST brief intervention, commonly referred to as ASSIST BI. The ASSIST BI is delivered individually to assess the health risks associated with substance use, provide basic emotional support and make timely referral to specialized care.



The combined intervention (SH+ and ASSIST BI) was implemented and evaluated with a range of activities starting with an inception meeting with stakeholders involving government leaders, NGOs and refugee leaders to present the planned activities and seek their feedback. Through refugee leaders we reached to group of refugee men and conducted the assessments using 8 item ASSIST questionnaire for alcohol and substance abuse, 6 item Kesser questionnaire for psychological distress (Kesser 6) and five item WHO functional questionnaire (WHO 5) for daily functioning. The participants were eligible for the program if they had mild to moderate scores for alcohol use and psychological distress.

The integrated program started with individual ASSIST BI sessions in which the facilitator provided personalized feedback on the individual's substance use risk to help them understand the impact of substance use on different areas of their lives including their health. During the individual session the facilitator used the flip book (which had pictures on the side the client was seeing and notes for the facilitators on the other side) to facilitate the discussion about alcohol and substance use. In these individual sessions, the participants learnt ways to reduce risks associated with alcohol and substance use. They also learnt to weigh the bad and good things associated with alcohol and substance use in order to take ultimate responsibility for the choices they make, in addition to learning strategies that help them to cut down or reduce intake of alcohol.

After completing this one session of ASSIST BI, the participants were enrolled in a self-help plus intervention delivered by a minimally trained lay provider weekly for 90 minutes over a five-week period. These sessions were provided in a group of up to 30 people using audio recordings, pictorial book and 2 minutes long small group discussions. From this intervention, the participants acquired five core skills, including grounding, meaning being aware of the present moment; unhooking, that is to say noticing difficult emotions and letting them go; acting on values, making room for difficult emotions and being kind to oneself and others.

After five weeks, post assessments for psychological distress, functioning and alcohol use were completed to determine each participant's scores before and after the intervention. The participants of SH+ and ASSIST BI reported positive changes because of the program. They said, "they were able to focus on daily life activities, take an active part in community events, reduce or stop alcohol consumption and engage in viable economic activities like farming." In this booklet we present some representative case examples of the participants to understand the situation before being connected to the program, during the program and after completing the program.



CASE STUDIES FROM SH+ AND ASSIST BI PROJECT FUNDED BY ELRHA'S RESEARCH FOR HEALTH IN HUMANITARIAN CRISES (R2HC) PROGRAM

CASE STUDY #1 for SH+ and ASSIST BI

Respondent: Martin Sebit



The program has helped me manage my stress that I would like to be a part of helping others who are stressed

Martin Sebit is a 50 year old South Sudanese refugee. He got to know the SH+ and ASSIST BI program when HealthRight came to teach in his community and enrolled members of the community. Prior to attending the program, Mr. Sebit felt a tremendous amount of stress. The war caused him to lose his property and his brothers. Back in South Sudan, Mr. Sebit ran a large clinic and had a stable income, but presently he is struggling to even have enough money to get food. He found the SH+ and ASSIST BI program invaluable to cope with his past and present stresses. Before the sessions, he did not like being around other people but now, he can be around community members and support them emotionally through their stresses. "The program has helped me manage my stress that I would like to be a part of helping others who are stressed", said Sebit. He requests HealthRight to continue with the program to benefit more people in his community.





CASE STUDY #2 for SH+ and ASSIST BI

Respondent: Malisha Samuel Aggrey

Malisha Samuel Aggrey is a 39 year old South Sudanese refugee. He came to know about and enrolled in the SH+ and ASSIST BI program through HealthRight staff who came to his community. Prior to the SH+ and ASSIST BI sessions, Mr. Aggrey was experiencing tremendous stress from his life drastically changing because of the war. In South Sudan he had a good livelihood as a Brac South Sudan field supervisor and owned a farm with five employees. Coming to Uganda, he lost his property and no longer had a stable job to provide for him and his family. His children have also not adjusted to the new living situation. Previously, Mr. Aggrey was able to provide them with anything they wished. Now in Uganda, he doesn't even have enough for their school fees.

The SH+ and ASSIST BI program has taught Mr. Aggrey how to cope with his daily stressors and how to think positively when he is stuck in a cycle of negativity. The program has taught him how to create positive actions to address his present difficulties instead of feeling like he had no hope and could do nothing. Mr. Aggrey is also trying to stop relying on alcohol and smoking to cope with his stress and instead create habits that enable him to change his lifestyle to ensure a better future for him and his family in Uganda.



I now know how to cope with my daily stressors and how to think positively when I am stuck in a cycle of negativity



CASE STUDY #3 for SH+ and ASSIST BI

Respondent: Alege Thomas



The program has now modified me totally from the bad things that I was doing... "My family is now happy with me... they are saying they can't believe that I could change like this."

Alege Thomas, a 26 year old man, was using alcohol and drugs to cope with stress over financial issues. Alege said that taking responsibility for his family became a problem, that he would spend most of his time involved in drugs along the roadside with other drug users. The little money that Alege made from "casual works (such as laying bricks, digging in garden)" was spent on drugs. Another issue Alege faced was getting sick and needing an operation, which he could not afford. Alege felt useless and was rude to his family and friends, he began fighting with his wife when drunk.

Alege spent money on alcohol and drugs instead of paying his children's school fees, so his children were sent home from school.

SH+ and ASSIST BI workers found Alege and invited him to the program sessions, which significantly changed Alege's behavior. Alege has reduced drinking alcohol and become healthier, getting his appetite back and gaining weight. Alege started saving and is now prepared to help his children if they get sick. Alege saved and got the medical operation he needed and started digging his field to cultivate cassava, sorghum and potatoes to make money. Alege shares the knowledge that he learned from the program with friends and people in his community, and he sees that those around him are changing as well. Alege tells those in his community that their hard-earned money should not be spent on useless things, but valuable ones. He encourages those who cannot stop using drugs and alcohol to begin reducing their usage. Alege has reduced his drinking to the weekends instead of every day and he stopped chewing marungi completely. Alege started treating his family better and "they can't believe that he could change like this."

After attending the SH+ and ASSIST BI program, Alege has become very positive about his life. He aims to open land for agriculture next year, he plans to take his children to private schools where they can get better teaching, he hopes to raise livestock to continue making income and he plans to continue to pass down the information that he learned to the next generation.



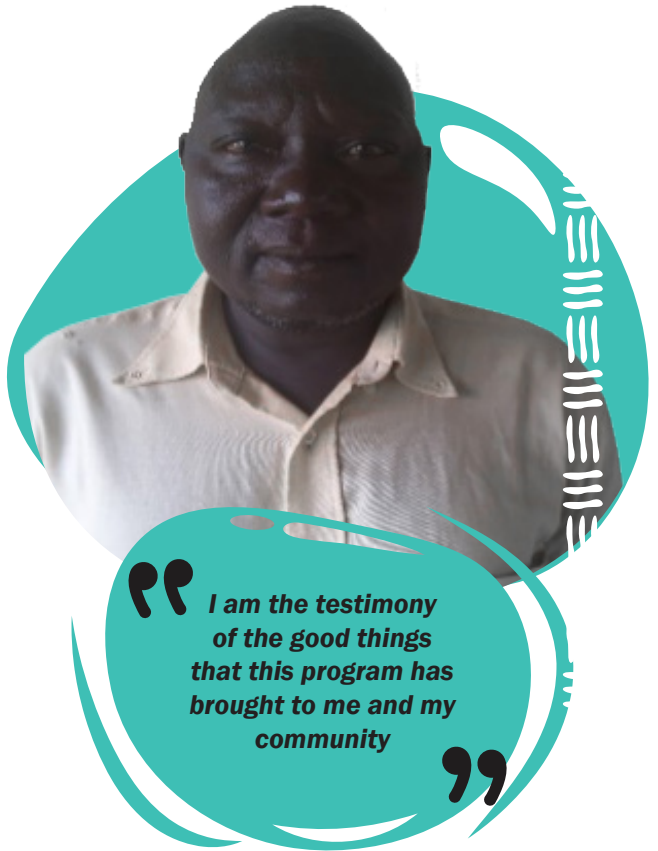
CASE STUDY #4 for SH+ and ASSIST BI

Respondent: John Lisok

John Lisok is a 55 year old South Sudanese male. In South Sudan he owned a business which was running well. After the outbreak of the war in South Sudan, Lisok was accused of aiding rebels and had no choice but to flee to Uganda. At this point he had no job, and no money so he was unable to provide basic food for the family and education to his children. This situation made him anxious and he started isolating himself. He later on resorted to alcohol to get relief from his worries and stress but alcohol destroyed his life. He became hostile and impatient. He also had bad relationship with the family.

One day, Lisok found out about a program when an HRI employee visited his community to seek out eligible participants for what they mentioned would be a series of interviews. Lisok was visited at his home and surveyed three times before he was deemed eligible and enrolled in an SH+ and ASSIST BI program with HealthRight.

After attending this program, Lisok made the decision to quit alcohol, and has seen positive improvements in his life. His relationships at home have totally changed for the better. He feels a lot more in control of his choices, his behaviour and his reactions, able to solve for issues peacefully. He has stopped isolating and is now a more active member of his community, still contributing to others from the little resources he has. He has since joined a savings group and feels more financially responsible with a greater sense of independence.



***I am the testimony
of the good things
that this program has
brought to me and my
community***

He expressed his sincere gratitude to HealthRight's programming for bringing hope to the community and hopes for more capacity so that more individuals are able to be treated. "I am the testimony of the good things that this program has brought to me and my community", said Lisok.

CASE STUDY #5 for SH+ and ASSIST BI

Respondent: Cosmas Mawa



“ Right now, I can also help those who drink like I used to and also help by advising them to reduce the drinking ”

Cosmas Mawa is a 29 year old man who was dealing with a lot of stress and drinking alcohol to cope before attending to the SH + and ASSIST BI program. Mawa lost his job due to the civil war in South Sudan. Mawa took care of his sick father from 2017-2018, which caused him a lot of stress. His brothers were killed when traveling to Uganda, a devastating event. Mawa lost a lot of his belongings, and he had to leave behind his small business as well as his cattle. Health issues also created stress for him, he is suffering from ulcers that causes pain on his neck and heart, which have been disturbing him for a long time. Mawa says that the biggest issue he faces is paying the school fees, which cause his children to stay at home and be unable to attend school. Mawa used alcohol excessively to deal with stress, he would drink to the extent that he would fall on his way home and his children would have to come fetch him, and he would not remember what had happened.

SH+ and ASSIST BI workers found Mawa in his community and explained the program to him. Mawa said that he was even drunk when they found him. After hearing more about the program, Mawa accepted the invitation and started attending the SH+ and ASSIST BI sessions. Mawa learned how to reduce his drinking and how to love the people around him. He says that he learned how to listen to people who try to pull him away from his problems. Mawa started building houses and planting vegetables. He also helps people who drink like he used to by advising them to reduce their drinking.



CASE STUDY #6 for SH+ and ASSIST BI

Respondent: Agele Santos

39 year old South Sudanese male, **Agele Santos** was formerly ridiculed, and outcasted from his community. He was constantly spotted by members of the community – perpetually intoxicated and unkempt – describing his former state of being as “dirty, drunk, shameful and shabby.” Santos, a former traffic officer who led a good life with a stable job and source of income, lost everything in the conflict. Without savings, or a backup plan he lacked a reason or will to live. His children often went hungry as a result of his habits and lack of ability to provide basic necessities. At one point in time, Santos recounts that his children were very sick and he could not bring them to hospital. He felt helpless and “useless on this earth”. He convinced himself that “God didn’t want him” and contemplated suicide to be free of his worries and shame.

Santos learned about HealthRight and its program when he was called for a meeting in the trading center by the refugee leader. When HealthRight staff met with Santos, they observed that he was drunk upon arrival. After assessment, he received one individual session on how to reduce alcohol and 5 sessions on stress management.

HealthRight’s program has taught Santos how to overcome stress and lead a more purposeful, and structured life. He has learned to move away from patterns of self-isolation and is committed not to allow alcohol or substances to control his life. HealthRight has not only altered the trajectory of his life, but the lives of his family members, who were victims of domestic abuse due to Santos’ former state of mind.



Santos has come a long way since his beginnings with HealthRight. Self Help Plus has enabled him to support his family. He raised enough money to support his 5 children and fund their education at a private school. He has built a house, bought cattle and even had a smartphone. He credits all of these accomplishments to HealthRight International and the program that saved his life.

CASE STUDY #7 for SH+ and ASSIST BI

Respondent: John Absalah



“

*I have restored my hope
that I can now do better*

”

John Absalah is a 27 year old man who was drinking alcohol to cope with his stress. John said that drinking alcohol felt like the only way for him to forget his problems. John suffered from a traumatic event when he witnessed the murder of his friend when they were fleeing the war in South Sudan. Witnessing this has caused John a lot of stress and he became dependent on alcohol and chewing marungi (Khat).

John learned about SH+ and ASSIST BI through a friend who he used to drink with, who was interviewed by HealthRight staff. John was assessed for alcohol use and level of distress and based on his scores he was enrolled in SH+ and ASSIST BI sessions. He said that the best part of the program was learning that alcohol cannot fix stress. John also learned how to “act on values” which has helped him to put effort into other things in life and stop being dependent on alcohol and marungi (Khat).

Encouraged by the learning from SH+ and ASSIST BI program, John started looking for ways to improve his life. He managed to enroll himself in a training to become a barber (hair dresser). With his hair dressing skills, he is able to generate income to support his family and pay school fees of his children. John appreciates the support from the SH+ and ASSIST BI program that changed his life.





CASE STUDY #8 for SH+ and ASSIST BI

Respondent: Joseph Lagu

Joseph Lagu is a 52 year old man who was drinking alcohol to cope with his stress before attending SH+ and ASSIST BI program. He was dealing with a lot of problems and could not pay school fees for his children. He could not provide necessities for his home and was struggling with overthinking. He would get angry easily and would become aggressive toward his wife when she would ask him for things.

Joseph learned about SH+ and ASSIST BI sessions by a team of workers on the ground who assessed him and enrolled him in the program. Through the sessions, he has learned to leave behind difficult thoughts and feelings and to concentrate on important things like working hard for his family. Joseph says that he has learned not to overthink and to let stress come and go in the present situation.

The program has helped Joseph to be focused on his work. He now works hard in his field and grows crops like sorghum and cassava to help support his family. He also rears some goats and keeps chicken for home consumption. He sells the surplus crops for his children's school fees. He plans to start a business once gaining capital.



I have learned not to overthink and to let stress come and go in the present situation



CASE STUDY #9 for SH+ and ASSIST BI

Respondent: Ngota Simon



My SUCCESS STORY FOR SH+ AND ASSIST BI SESSIONS:

I'm Ngota Simon, age 38 years old, Kakma by tribe, a South Sudanese born from a small village called Nyori in Morobo County-South Sudan.

I grew in a big family - well-off, and had successfully studied to certain level. My father died when I was about to graduate and finally I dropped-out from school. I had to come back and manage in order to manage this big family. And in total I married two women with six children each.

When the war broke down in 2016, I had to run to Uganda and currently settled in Ofua 5 - Rhino Camp Settlement. In the camp, life became more harder than I expected because I lost all the wealth during the war and managing this big family with a total of 29 dependants almost all are children became difficult. Most of my times I become worried and absent minded with a lot of thoughts that ranges from disappearing away to even ending-up my life. So, at last, I decided to handle a useless life; of excessive drinking of alcohol, spending much of my time with friends whom we drink together, doing unproductive activities, chewing "Marungi" and use of drug abuse.



I thought by living in that reckless life, I would get relieved from the difficult thoughts and feelings but it even created more problems in me and my family.

I became rude and ferocious to my family members including the neighbours. I continued to exhaust the little resources that I had for drinking not minding children's education and support to my relatives, but rather I blame them of not doing enough to support themselves. I became man of my own who does not listen to any advice or greet neighbours but rather suspicious of them for stealing my properties hence creating bad relationships up ~~and~~ to my working place.

One day, I came to know about SH+ and ASSIST B1 Session programme through the community leaders and Health Right Volunteers who made announcements and conducted a Sensitization and dialogue on SH+ program.

From there I became interested in the program and I was enrolled to the SH+ Session groups in Ofua 5 Village.

From the Sessions, I learnt that SH+ is a program that gives us ways on how we can manage our stress by ourselves whenever we are in difficult moments of thoughts and feelings.

it helped me to learn new skills of how to manage stress such as:-
grounding, unhooking, living in our values
being kind and making a room.

My target was to live a prosperous life,
have a peaceful family, well educated
children living in updated accommodation
through change of attitude in behaviour,
hardworking, savings, good relationship
and being supportive to children education

After attending SH+ sessions, I got changed
totally. I withdrew slowly from my
bad group and started joining my
family members and neighbours,
interacting with them freely,
sharing experiences, and spending
much of my time with the family
members. I also went to church and got saved.

I got much convinced with the session that
talks about acting on our values and
the options in life especially option
number two "change what you can
change and accept the pain of what
you can not change and live by your
values."

Therefore I request my beloved households who had related life style like mine both refugees and host communities particularly refugees whose food ration reduced to 30% and others chopped completely to join SH+ and ASSIST Session so as to learn ~~new~~ Skills on how to manage stress on their own.

My message to the public is that "drinking alcohol, fighting, isolation and committing suicide or any other negative act in life in response to stress is not a solution but rather cause more harm to our lives and economy. Let us learn positive skills of managing our stress for a better life sustainability and let us manoeuvre the chance from SH+ sessions to acquire new skills. And thanks

God bless you all and SH+ donors.

CASE STUDIES FROM SH+ 360 PROJECT FUNDED BY ELRHA'S HUMANITARIAN INNOVATION FUND (HIF) PROGRAM

CASE STUDY #1 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Annet Ropani



“
With this program
I now know how to
avoid stress
”

28 year old **Annet Ropani**, a South Sudanese refugee, suffered greatly in the aftermath of the war in South Sudan. She and those in her community lost relatives, including husbands and children. Now in Uganda, she worries not only for her current situation, but the one in her home country that she hopes to return to one day. The heat where she lives makes it difficult to plant crops, so hunger is common in the community. There is no medical facility in the area which makes it challenging to receive treatment when someone at home falls sick. Her children not being able to go to school creates further tension in the household. All these stressors have made it difficult for

Ropani to cope without outside help.

Ropani heard about Self Help Plus (SH+) program when HealthRight and BRAC conducted participant interviews through the savings group she was in. After being interviewed, Ropani and her group joined the program. There, Ropani learnt ways to manage stress and anxiety, such as breathing exercises and focusing on current actions. She learnt to focus on the tasks at hand, wholeheartedly, and free of mental burden. Ropani now sees that through these exercises, she can focus on creating positive thoughts and eliminating the negative ones. Ropani has learnt to collaborate with her community and learn from them, acknowledging that through hard work, she can focus on the positive and build a better future. “With this program I now know how to avoid stress,” reflects Ropani.

Following the program, Ropani is determined to work hard on her mental health and for her future. She wants to be an exemplary and responsible person in her community. Free of the worst of her mental burdens, she is looking forward to completing her studies and getting a degree. She is thankful for HealthRight's program for teaching her how to manage stress and prioritize her values. With these skills, she knows she can take better care of her children and pass on the lessons to them when they encounter hardships. In the future, she hopes more people are able to benefit from the skills taught through the program.



CASE STUDY #2 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Sarafina Abau

Sarafina Abau, 37 years old, is a refugee from South Sudan currently residing in Uganda with her children. Abau described short-term memory loss and speaking to herself as some of the causes of her current stress load. Before he passed away, her husband would help with the children and lessen her load. With her parents still in South Sudan, she has no immediate family other than her children living in Uganda. In the refugee camp, there is little access to healthcare and food. Sowing the land is particularly difficult and the yield is low, so hunger is not uncommon. She has additional dangers to face as a single mother, evidenced by a man's attempt to burn her house down after refusing his proposal. Despite not being in a conflict zone, Abau and her family still face hardships that are amounted onto Abau as the head of the family. Once, Abau felt the weight was too much to bear and that she was tempted to use illicit substances. One of her daughters prevented her right before she could use them, insisting that now that their father was gone, they needed at least one parent to take care of them.

Abau heard about the SH+ program when HealthRight partners conducted interviews in the camp. After an individual interview, Abau was enrolled in SH+ sessions. Through these regular sessions, Abau feels relieved of the incapacitating worries she once had. She started to take care of herself once again by improving her personal hygiene and her social life. Abau began to focus on the activities she values. "These teachings have changed my life like the word of God in the bible," she explains how she has been positively impacted. To her lifestyle, the SH+ sessions have provided impactful skills that Abau now wants to share with those around her.



*These teachings
have changed my life
like the word of God
in the bible*

After the program, Abau set her mind on three clear goals: do agricultural work to save money, start a business, and pay her children's school fees. Now that she can focus properly, her home is in good shape and she can be more productive towards financial stability. She feels at peace and will focus on her children. She is thankful towards HealthRight's program for its teachings and grateful that the program was conducted in a refugee community that is often overlooked.

CASE STUDY #3 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Asha Susan



“

***The program has made me
to remain strong amidst
stressful moments***

”

Asha Susan, a 30 year old South Sudanese woman, suffered a variety of hardships and losses through her life. Since fleeing South Sudan for safety in Uganda, she has been separated from her parents with no way of contacting them. Her eldest brother, her biggest supporter, was killed in the conflict. Her husband is unsupportive, leaving her to handle all the meals, school fees, and expenses for her children. She had to sell most of their household items in order to make ends meet. Feeling completely isolated in the face of adversity, Susan turned to drinking alcohol to numb the pain. She stopped attending community events and wanted to divorce her husband. “I even thought that if this is how I stay in the world, it is useless”. The stress built up to the point that Susan wondered if living was still worth it.

Susan was in a Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) group when Brac Uganda came to talk about the project. She was selected as one of the participants. During the program, Susan learned ways to cope with stress, such as detaching from difficult thoughts and reorienting her focus on the present. She was taught to ground herself and do breathing exercises to prevent her mood from declining. She also regained a desire to connect with her faith and began to attend church, especially when she was feeling stressed. Susan also saw the value in community and friendships, having someone to lean on when she wanted advice or share good moments.

Because of these SH+ sessions, Susan is no longer feeling overwhelmed and stressed. Her behaviour has improved, something her children also noted. She is happy that she can be a better mother and person. She is thankful for being introduced to these sessions by HealthRight and believes it has made a positive impact to the community as a whole. “The program has made me to remain strong amidst stressful moments,” said Susan. In the future, Susan hopes to regain a healthy relationship with her husband and be financially stable so that she can send her children to school. One day, she hopes to reunite with her parents.

CASE STUDY #4 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Silvia Adoru

Silvia Adoru is 30 years old and from South Sudan. Before participating in the program, Adoru was having suicidal thoughts and desires to leave her family. She was married, with children, but the financial responsibilities and time commitments felt like an insurmountable pressure on Adoru. She was never able to complete her studies because there was no time or money, which left her feeling unaccomplished and helpless. She also found herself blaming her father, who previously left the family, leaving them with no financial support, only troubles. Now with her own family, Adoru felt trapped and in distress. At night, she couldn't sleep, and her emotions were disturbed. Adoru had reached a point where she didn't know what to do with her life.

During the program, Adoru learned how to control her stress. Previously, she would find that her mind was only occupied by difficult thoughts, which made it challenging to focus on the present. Through the skills acquired from the program, Adoru was able to detach from those thoughts and refocus on the present moment. This made it easier to accomplish the tasks that she wanted, including being a better mother and taking care of herself. The SH+ sessions prompted her bonding with her fellow community members. By learning these skills, Adoru also found it easier to reconnect with her faith. "I am able to manage stress by myself by going to prayers and reading the bible, avoiding isolation", said Adoru.

After the program, Adoru stopped fighting with her husband and is focusing on raising her children and building relationships in the community. She is anticipating watching



"I am able to manage stress by myself by going to prayers and reading the bible, avoiding isolation"

her children grow and go to school. If given the opportunity, she would also love to return to her studies. She is thankful that she was able to change her way of thinking because of the Self Help Plus program and wants to continue in the direction of positive thoughts. Looking to the future, Adoru is hopeful of the future improvements in her life now that she is not overwhelmed and stressed.

CASE STUDY #5 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Susan Modo



“

Now when stress comes up, I know how to control and manage it.

”

Susan Modo is a young South Sudanese woman. She heard about the SH+ program through Brac Uganda and HealthRight. Prior to the program, she faced significant stress from her experiences during the South Sudan civil war and she also faced severe stress from the difficulties making a living in Uganda. This motivated her to enroll in the SH+ program after taking an assessment with Brac Uganda. Through the program she learnt to be kind and also act on her values, and making room for difficult emotions. Ms. Modo feels that the program has had a tremendous positive impact on her life. Now, “when stress comes up, I know how to control and manage it.” The program had helped her gain motivation to work hard in school, to achieve a better livelihood and to love her family and community. She hopes that the program can continue to help others in her community just like how it changed her life.



CASE STUDY #6 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Lucy Modo

Lucy Modo is a 24 year old woman who was facing immense mental stress before attending the SH+ program. Lucy was very stressed about school and had to drop out since she had no way to support herself or help from her parents. She wanted to join school, but could not afford. Leaving school “tortured” Lucy. She was in a very negative headspace, she called herself useless, and felt angry. Additionally, Lucy would feel sick and go to the hospital for treatment, but would find out that she wasn’t actually physically ill. Lucy had difficulty attending gatherings. Lucy would isolate herself by leaving gatherings, telling people she was going to sleep, when really, she was just too stressed to be there. Lucy learned about SH+ program from her community, and enrolled in it because she was touched by the questions, she was asked by program staff. Through the program, Lucy says that she learned a lot of practical lessons. She learned how to ground herself when she is stressed. She now meets friends and discusses things when feeling stressed. She also learned how to make herself busy. Other stress management skills that Lucy learned are how to breathe deeply and to do exercise like running.

Lucy says that she has gained knowledge to manage her stress and the confidence to do things knowing that she can achieve them as planned. The sessions have enabled Lucy to be creative and do things on her own. Additionally, the program has helped Lucy socialize with other people instead of isolating herself. She now meets with her friends; they discuss about their life situations; they tell stories about difficulties they go through and come up with good solutions to the problems. She shares the information and skills she learnt from SH+ program with her friends and help them to manage their stress. Lucy hopes that the program continues to benefit her community.



“ **The program has helped me socialize with other people since I used to isolate myself**

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CASE STUDY #7 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Nyoma Benjamin



I think after the SH+ Program I started settling myself, actually my plans came up very well after realizing that I can do and can still live on this earth

Nyoma Benjamin, a 33 year old, South Sudanese male. During the war in South Sudan, he lost family members and was forcibly displaced from his home. He felt hopeless while resettling as a refugee in Uganda as he lacked resources and the tools to cope with his stress. Due to stress, Benjamin could not focus on his daily activities. He felt absent minded, he lost appetite, was having headaches and had bad relations with friends. He was isolating himself from the community, was often aggressive and looking for excuses to quarrel.

After Benjamin was recruited to participate in the SH+ and ASSIST BI Program, he learned five major skills (grounding, unhooking, acting on values, being kind and making room for difficult thoughts and feelings) which changed his life. He remained calm and focused on the present moment. He started eating and interacting with his family and friends. He started working and supporting his family. He started loving himself and those around him. He is now more motivated than ever to feed his family and to send his children to a good school.



CASE STUDY #8 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Sabah Justin Blessing

Sabah Justin Blessing is a 26 year old South Sudanese male. He found out about HealthRight because of their presence in his area. When HealthRight came to his village, they gathered the community and interviewed individuals to determine stress levels, and eligibility for HealthRight's workshops and various offerings. Following Blessing's assessment, he was recommended for the SH+ program.

Prior to this assessment Blessing says that his stress roots in his status as a refugee and his displacement and trauma as a result of the war in South Sudan. He had to endure loss, and experienced heavy trauma first-hand owing to horrific experiences of witnessing people brutally murdered and harmed before his eyes.

Blessing was enrolled in the SH+ program, which would require him to attend sessions for 5 days and then be assessed following HealthRight's intervention. He says he learned different skills from the sessions including grounding, acting on one's values, acknowledging stress, and unhooking from stressful situations. He says he uses grounding when he is stressed and needs to bring his mind to the present situation. He uses acting on his values to identify what he needs to commit to his daily life. He uses making room to let uncomfortable feelings enter into his mind and remain in control, and he uses unhooking to detach from stress.



*Thanks to the SH+ program,
I am now able to work hard,
prioritize my values, and change
the course of my life. I am now
kind to those around me and
I am starting to support my
community*

Blessing says that he uses these valuable techniques on a daily basis, and they are incredibly helpful in keeping his mind forward facing rather than dwelling on the past and allowing trauma to control his life. He feels he now has a better idea of what he wants for his future and is able to set goals. "Thanks to the SH+ program, I am now able to work hard, prioritize my values, and change the course of my life. I am now kind to those around me and I am starting to support my community", said Blessing.

CASE STUDY #9 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Seid Peter



I am now able to identify and manage my difficulties. I have become a more caring and kind person. I have a new focus on life and I am able to see my goals more clearly

22 year old male, **Seid Peter** fled the South Sudan civil war. Before the program, he had feelings of anger, isolation, and stress. He was stressed because of losing loved ones, experiences of violence in the community, lack of educational opportunities, lack of food and resources to help those around him.

Peter learned about the HealthRight program through Brac Uganda staff. With the help of a research assistant, he was able to enrol into the SH+ program. The program helped him reframe from difficult thoughts when he felt stressed. "I am now able to identify and manage my difficulties. I have become a more caring and kind person. I have a new focus on life and I am able to see my goals more clearly," said Peter.

With a newfound focus, Peter is able to attend classes and concentrate, something that was previously challenging for him due to his history. He is able to pass his exams and build a positive relationship with the community around him. Peter hopes to be a role model in being kind and helping people in his community.

CASE STUDY #10 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Victoria Gila

Victoria Gila, a 29 year old female fled the war in South Sudan with her husband after losing many brothers, sisters, and friends due to the conflict. As she got to the refugee settlement in Uganda there were difficulties in finding work, so she struggled to find an income. Stress only increased as she thought of her family and friends she left behind and struggled with new diseases in the refugee settlement. During this time, she felt a lot of anger with depressive symptoms including overthinking, frequent crying, feelings of loneliness, and oversleeping. As a result, she had difficult relations with her husband. She felt as if she didn't understand her husband anymore.

Gila discovered about SH+ program via Brac Uganda staff. After an assessment from the data collectors, she was eligible to join. In the program, she learned to ground herself and her emotions. She learned that by caring for herself and acting on her own values. She is also caring for her family to help them all succeed.

Now Gila works in the field and is able to provide food for her family. She is better able to manage her emotions and make room in her life for what she needs. After the program, "I feel that I have the tools to make new friends and cope with my daily life challenges," said Gila. She has now managed to secure resources to send her children to school. Gila hopes to work hard, continue to love and understand her husband, and provide a better future for her children.



“I feel that I have the tools to make new friends and cope with my daily life challenges

”

CASE STUDY #11 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Wani Martine



“

Making room is one of the lessons I have learned. Whenever I am stressed I always create room for stress to come in and also let it go. I also learned to be kind which helps me be kind to all people in all situations.

”

Wani Martin, 23-year-old male from South Sudan experienced a lot of losses and difficulties throughout his childhood. A decade ago, while in school his mother passed away and his family decided to withhold that information until he had finished his classes. Several years later his father got married

to another woman who did not take care of Martin as he was not her biological child. Nobody paid his school fees so he had to drop out from school. Due to all these difficulties, he was anxious and stressful.

Martin first learned of SH+ program when he was approached in June 2022. Research assistants were going door to door in his neighborhood disseminating information about the program. When they got to his house, they were able to give him more information and answer his questions about the program. He thought that this program might help him reduce his stress and requested the staff to enroll him. The research assistants assessed him for his level of distress and found him eligible to be enrolled into the program. He regularly attended the five sessions of the SH+ program. After completing the program Martin saw lots of positive changes in his behavior. He was able to notice his feelings and negative thoughts and refocus on the present moment. He gained skills in being kind to himself and others who may be in difficult situations. He developed a more positive outlook about his life and the daily challenges. “Making room is one of the lessons I have learned. Whenever I am stressed, I always create room for stress to come in and also let it go. I also learned to be kind which helps me to be kind to all people in all situations”, said Martin.

Martin's main goal after completing SH+ program is to go back to school. He has started training in documentary style videography and wants to help others who may be in stressful situations.



CASE STUDY #12 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Data Robert

I'm Data Robert participant of SH+, I live in Amuru Village ofua4, a refugee aged 36 years old.

Before joining this program with Health Right I was mobilised by their staff to participate in the program.

This found me struggle with difficulties that has made not manage my life in the refugee camp, following the consequence of the conflict in South Sudan. I even don't manage my little financial budget.

But now after gaining the training of SH+ I found my self realising things that worked me up. I was able to unhook them using grounding strategies, I developed being kind to my self and others. It has improved my saving and I started my farming of rabbits which, I harvest them for paying children to school.

The lesson I have learnt from this program is that no condition is permanent, it is like weather that comes with clouds and it goes. Focusing on the lesson that I have learnt I need to have value for myself to reach my goal.

This made me develop my personal goal, to increase my family income by 50% by the end of the year 2025.

The training has improved my family character, it has reduced stress, problem solving and evening been kind to my neighbours through sharing of little resources.

To I feel grounded what situation that affects me I have positive mind set over it, the situations are not shadowing me now because I manage them in strengthening my relationship with others.

My recommendation to SHH, they should ~~continue~~ continue with same program that focus on strengthening parents in adapting physical and emotional stability.

The SHH program should make 360 degree project to focus on communities and developing sustainable programs on Agriculture and Savings to increase households income.

I feel that communities should support this program of SHH through donation, participation to empower the vulnerable communities that need support.

You will not stand alone when you are not been supported this program need more support for its funding.

I really appreciate this SHH I wish it last for more than 15 years in our communities.

Thanks
Data Robot
Participants.

CASE STUDY #13 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Jacqueline Aputu

SUCCESS STORY OF JACKLINE APUTU

I am called Jackline Aputu a refugee in Uganda living in Ofua 5 Rhino Camp refugee settlement Uricama sub-county Terego district. I am 22 years old and married.

To begin with, the word SH+ stands for self help plus. therefore, before joining the SH+ and Assist B1 sessions training by Health right, I was in a situation as described below.

In the family when I talk to a family member, it is use to be with quarrels, noisy and no peaceful share of ideas.

I also have no idea of helping my relatives even by cooking, garden work, sweeping etc.

I don't listen to any guidance or any piece of advice given to me by my parents.

Loss of appetite, I don't feel like eat food, and even drinking water alone is a problem.

Sometimes I use to get tears when the view of losing my parents, and dear friends in South Sudan came into my mind.

When it comes to night hours, sometimes I have a sleepless night by bad dreams.

Sometimes I remain restless, tired and so tempered that when anyone talks to me I feel like to fight him or her regardless of the age with old or young.

I knew the program through the meeting held in SPC of a 5 block & by Health right.

I was enrolled into SH+ program by registration and through oral inter-view by Health right official.

In the program organised by Health right, I learnt the following.

put attention in what you are planning to do or what in what you are doing.

One should also be in love with his or her parents and other relatives.

A person need to be responsible in the community where you live.

I also learnt being tolerant, calm and polite.

I would like to extend my Sincerely thanks to the officials of Health right for the program since I noticed the following changes in my self after participating in the program.

I personal have a right decision incase any information is passed to me.

I am involving my self i all the family house work like cooking, washing, sweeping etc.

I am able to ask for help from my relatives even if I feel stressed or by choosing relaxing activities.

I am able to remain calm when faced with problems or when someone has made me get annoyed.

I am able to ask what I want from my relatives and my husband.

I am able to ignore my personal feelings about the challenging situations in the refugee settlement.

I am able to understand problems and find solutions to it.

I am now able to put messages across to people through writing or oral communication.

The aspect that had a positive impact in my day to day life is the aspect of ReJa NeSo.

My message to the future participant of SH+ is that to have a better ways of overcoming the challenging situation in refugee camps or settlement don't wait join Health right for the program.

my message to the larger audience is that trainings conducted in within the settlements are far better than being taken abroad since one will have access to do other daily routines in the family.

CASE STUDY #14 for SH+ 360

Respondent: Amule Philip Sebit



A SUCCESS STORY ON SH+ PROGRAM.

I am by names Amule Philip Sebit, age 37, Married, Male and ~~Ref~~ Refugee registered under Dfna 4 Village, Dfna Zone of Rhino Camp Refugee Settlement Ierego district who was a participant of SH+ program implemented by Health Right International.

Before the SH+ program I ~~was~~ was staying in isolation and not concentrating in ^{what} I am suppose to do as a household head which made my family to go through difficult situations.

I came to know about the program through our community leaders after a meeting conducted by the Health Right team who came to the community to inform the community about the program.

I was enrolled to the program after being assessed by a The Researchers who visited our group and conducted individual assessment to measure the level of stress of which I happened to qualify to be a participant.

I learnt new ways of dealing with stressful situations by applying the SH+ helping skills i.e. grounding, Unhooking, Acting on your values, being kind and making room which helped me so much.

My personal goals are to live free stress by practicing the SH+ skills every day and focus on my day to day activities.



The Changes I have seen in me after attending the program is that I am able to focus on my activities at home and socialize with other community members and get better ideas from them. I used to ~~be~~ experience some body pain especially heart burn, back pain and head ache but now am not experiencing those signs frequently.

The aspect of this program that has positive impact in my day to day life is the way the helping skills can be ~~be~~ practised. It is simple and can be done within short time and one be relieved and refocus on ~~on~~ that activity one is suppose to do.

My Message to the future SH+ participants is that the program is helpful and can change our lives and the way we react to situations. The future participants should also attend the sessions regularly because they are all connected to each other and always practice the exercises while in session and even at home.

My key message to the audience is that program is good and people who may have the capacity to contribute ~~to~~ for the continuation of this program is kindly request to do so in order for the implementing Organisation to reach to many people in the community.





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