

**Position: Advocacy Officer**

**Reporting to: Advocacy Manager**

**StrongMinds** ([www.strongminds.org](http://www.strongminds.org)) is a dynamic and fast growing 501(c)(3) social enterprise based in Maplewood, N.J, that focuses on one of the most underserved populations and one of the most pervasive mental illnesses in the world. We treat depression among women of all ages in Africa, where access to mental health treatment is extremely limited, and will be launching our services in Newark, New Jersey beginning in 2022.

Since its start in 2014, StrongMinds has treated over 170,000 women with depression in Uganda and Zambia. *We are the only organization scaling a solution to depression with a potential to serve millions of people in the next ten years.*

StrongMinds has earned an impressive reputation in the global mental health space. In addition to media coverage in the New York Times, Forbes, BBC World Service, and the Stanford Social Innovation Review, we are described by UK organization Founders Pledge as the most cost-effective mental health organization working in the developing world.

**About StrongMinds Uganda**

StrongMinds Uganda (SMU), is a non-profit, non-governmental organization (Registration No.S.5914/11746) situated at Plot 30, Luthuli Rise Bugolobi, PO Box 35874, Kampala, Uganda. SMU's mandate is to improve the mental health of women in Uganda by implementing a simple, evidence-based, and cost-efficient model of group talk therapy, based on group interpersonal psychotherapy (IPT-G). SMU has field presence in Lamwo, Kotido, Mbale, Wakiso, Mayuge, Mbarara, Mukono, Kampala, and Iganga. SMU services can also be accessed virtually via \*252# and select option 10 for free counseling over the phone.

**Position Description: Advocacy Officer**

This position will support SMU advocacy agenda assisting to advocate for effective mental health policy of people with mental illnesses and their families. It will do so by consulting effectively, working collaboratively, undertaking policy analysis and research, preparing reports, correspondence and submissions, and conducting people centered advocacy for the benefit of people with mental health issues, their families and carers.

**Responsibilities:**

- Undertake specific policy research and analysis, and prepare high quality reports, position papers, plans, campaign plans, submissions and correspondences.
- Map out and consistently update key SMU participation forums at national and local government level across relevant line ministries.
- Support in the development, maintenance and regularly update commitment and contact logs for each advocacy campaign.
- Build and maintain effective relationships with stakeholders in the key line ministries including but not limited to MoH, MoES, MoF, MoGLSD among others.
- Support the design and implementation of joint advocacy campaigns in partnerships with members, consortiums, coalitions, and technical working groups to which SMU is a member.
- The officer shall represent SMU in relevant advocacy platforms and forums as delegated by the Advocacy Manager.
- Work with the communications team to develop relevant Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials to facilitate mental health advocacy.
- Support the Advocacy manager to facilitate relations between SMU and key Government Ministries and maintain useful linkages and dialogue with all other relevant stakeholders to

ensure collaboration, synergy, sharing of experiences and that the Ministries deliver a coordinated response for mental health.

- Adhere to StrongMinds's Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct, Gender Policy and other StrongMinds policies.

## **Essential Experience**

- Experience and training on policy and advocacy.
- Good knowledge of the mental and the health field, including the work of academic/research contacts, NGOs, UN agencies
- Good presentation and persuasion skills.
- Experience of policy research, having written and published policy reports and briefings and evaluating evidence of their impact.
- Strong persuasive writing skills with the ability to write a variety of documents and communications for different audiences.
- A strong understanding of the mental health sector, human rights, mental health reform and recovery.
- Experience in and commitment to establishing or maintaining collaborative approaches and in consulting effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and organisations.
- Excellent verbal and interpersonal skills with ability to advocate and negotiate with people in various positions and organisational settings.
- Capacity to work both independently and constructively as part of a team to meet shared objectives.
- Excellent time management and organisational skills with the ability to multitask, work under pressure and meet strict deadlines.

## **Desirable:**

- Experience and training on policy and advocacy.
- Good knowledge of the mental health including the work of academic/research contacts, NGOs and international agencies
- Good presentation and persuasion skills Experience of policy research, having written and published policy reports and briefings and evaluating evidence of their impact.
- Understanding of Government Structures at local and national level.

## **Education**

- A qualification in social sciences, humanities, community development or related field, or relevant experience
- At least 5 years' demonstrated experience developing and implementing public sector/government and NGO partnerships, including detailed understanding of Ministerial-level and national/ district/ county-level decision-making and operational structures.
- Proven experience in a technical leadership role in the mental health field, implementation and analysis techniques for development programs are essential
- Ability to effectively work in teams and embrace participatory approaches; Capacity to work in a fast-paced work environment on multiple tasks; Takes pride in the quality and integrity of s/he work;
- Demonstrable results oriented, flexible and problem-solving skills.
- Knowledge and ability to use appropriate software packages is a MUST for this position.
- Excellent project management skills, with a capacity to be detail-oriented when circumstances require.

**The successful Advocacy Officer will also be expected to embrace and role model the core values of StrongMinds:**

- We are people focused.
- We think big and act fast.
- We are data driven.
- We do what we say and say what we do.
- We believe in collaboration, not competition.

As part of a rapidly growing NGO, this role has the potential for advancement. Smart, aggressive, and ambitious candidates are encouraged to apply.

**Salary:** Competitive salary commensurate with experience.

**Start Date:** Immediate

**COVID-19 considerations:**

StrongMinds strictly adheres to all CDC guidelines for Covid-19 protection.

**As part of the application process, applicants are expected to answer one of the questions below to be sent with the applications.**

1. **You have been selected as and Advocacy Officer in StrongMinds Uganda.**
  - a) **Identify and advocacy issue related to mental health in Uganda and develop an advocacy statement for the issue.**
  - b) **Identify all the likely stakeholders and briefly highlights their role in the issue.**
2. **You have been selected as an Advocacy Officer in StrongMinds Uganda.**
  - a) **Identify a mental health advocacy issue in Uganda- give a brief context of the issue while highlighting the gap.**
  - b) **Develop an advocacy message to a decision maker regarding the above issue and a message delivery plan.**

**To apply:**

Send résumé to [careersug@strongminds.org](mailto:careersug@strongminds.org) mentioning “Advocacy Officer” in the subject line.

**Deadline:** 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.