

A person is shown from the chest up, with their face obscured by their hands. The person's hands are pressed against their face, with fingers spread, suggesting a state of distress, trauma, or grief. The image is in a monochromatic blue-grey tone.

# **Psychosocial Support in Uganda for Victims of Sexual Violence and Trauma**

## **Enhancing Care and Recovery**

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# Outline

- Introduction
- Context and background
- Understanding psychosocial support
- Current situation in Uganda
- Recommendations for improvement



# Context and Background

❑ Trauma and sexual violence are widespread issues impacting millions globally.

❑ Impact of Trauma and Sexual Violence:

❑ Psychological Effects:

❑ PTSD, anxiety, depression.

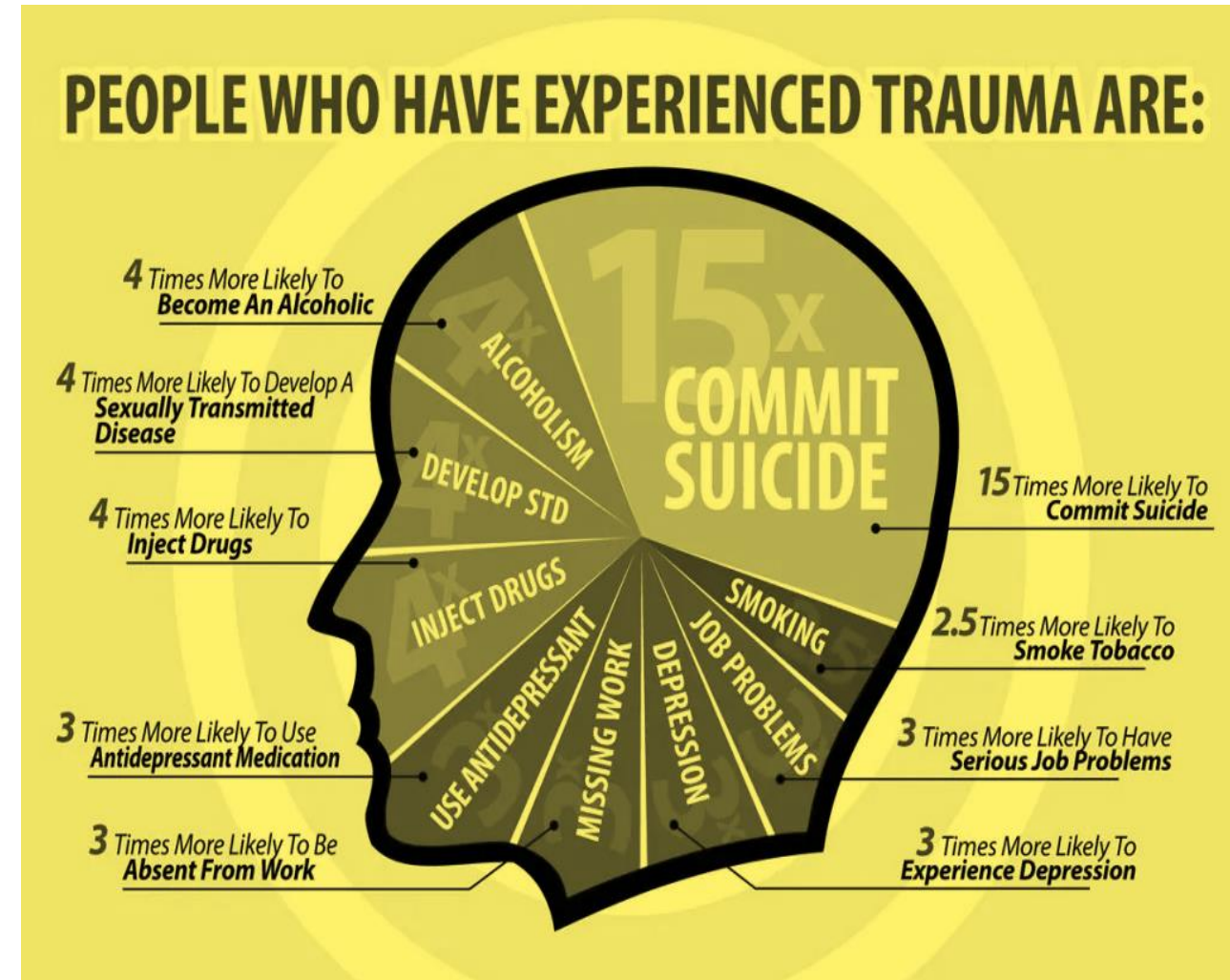
❑ Physical Health:

❑ Injuries, chronic health issues.

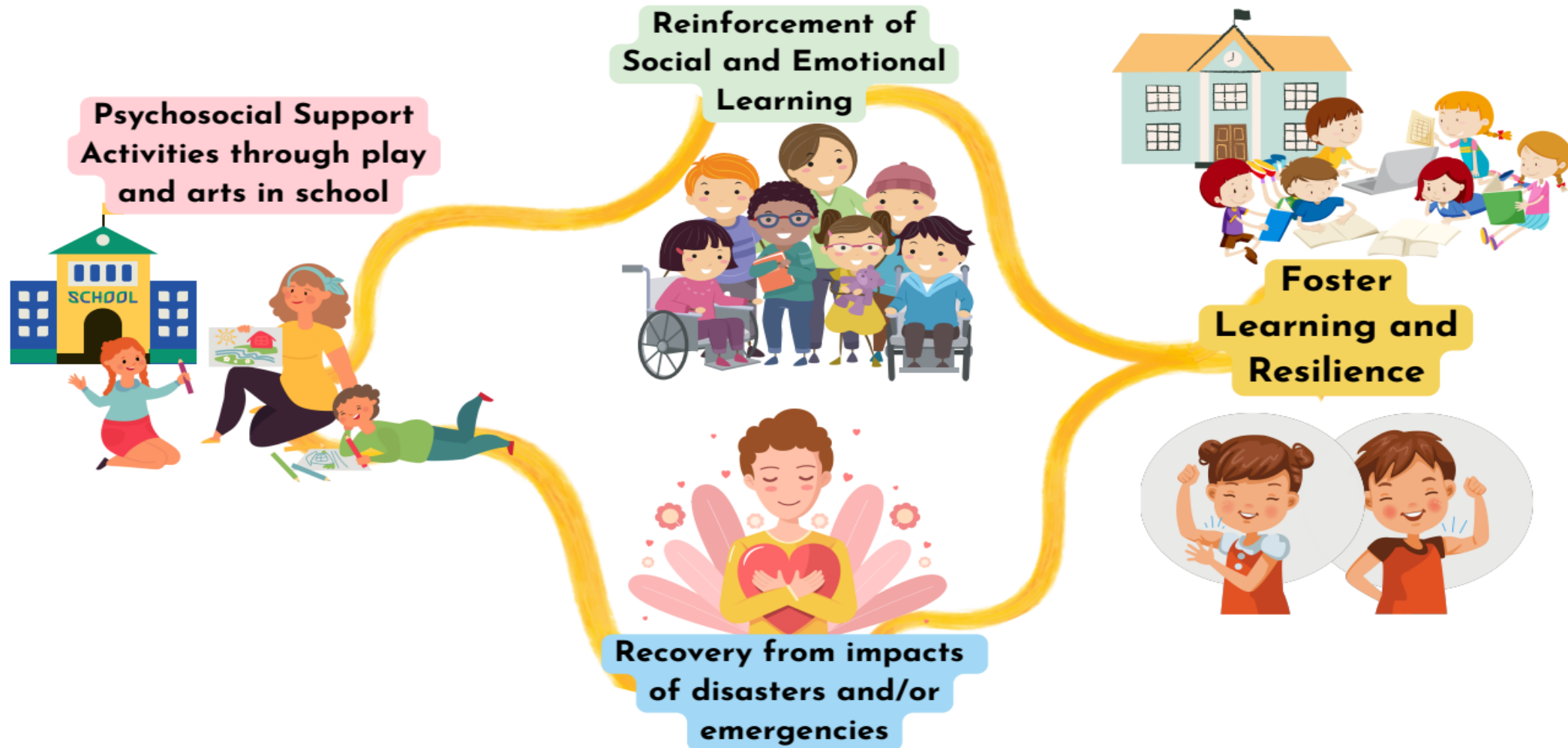
❑ Social Consequences:

❑ Stigmatization, social withdrawal.

❑ Economic Impact: Loss of productivity, medical expenses.



Psychosocial support refers to the assistance provided to individuals and communities to promote their mental health and social well-being.



# Components of Psychosocial Support for Trauma and Sexual Violence

## Emotional Support

- Involves providing empathy, understanding, and encouragement.

## Implementation

- Active listening: Engaging attentively with the individual to understand their feelings and perspectives.
- Providing comfort and reassurance: Offering words of encouragement and empathy to help individuals feel supported.
- Peer support groups: Facilitating groups where individuals can share their experiences and support each other.





# Components of Psychosocial Support for Trauma and Sexual Violence



## Psychological Counseling

- Psychological counseling involves therapeutic interventions aimed at helping individuals cope with the psychological aftermath of their experiences.

## Implementation

- Individual therapy: One-on-one sessions with a trained therapist to address personal issues and develop coping mechanisms.
- Group therapy: Facilitated sessions where survivors can share experiences and support each other under professional guidance.
- Specialized trauma-focused therapies: CBT, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) that are specifically designed to treat trauma-related symptoms..

# Components of Psychosocial Support for Trauma and Sexual Violence

## Social and Community Support

- This involves collective efforts to create a supportive environment for victims of trauma and sexual violence.

## Implementation

- Support groups: Regular meetings where survivors can share their experiences and receive mutual support.
- Community awareness programs: Initiatives to educate the public about sexual violence and promote supportive attitudes and behaviors.
- Collaboration with local organizations: Working with NGOs, community groups, and service providers to offer comprehensive support, including legal aid, medical services, and financial assistance..



# Current Situation in Uganda: Existing support mechanisms

Governmental Programs	Role of NGOs	Community-Based Initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Gender-Based Violence (GBV) shelters and one-stop centers offering medical care, legal aid, and psychological support. E.g. The Center for Domestic Violence Prevention (CEDOVIP), The Women's Protection Center (WPC), ActionAid Uganda's GBV Shelters, Raising Voices' SASA! Initiative and UNFPA-supported One-Stop Centers:</li><li>These efforts are overseen by the Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA Uganda)</li><li>ActionAid Uganda, and Raising Voices provide legal aid, counseling, and advocacy.</li><li>These NGOs also run community education and awareness campaigns to combat stigma and promote gender equality.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Community-based initiatives are crucial in remote and rural areas where formal services may be limited.</li><li>Local leaders and volunteers provide support and referral services.</li><li>Programs like SASA! (developed by Raising Voices) aim to change community attitudes towards gender-based violence and empower women and girls.</li></ul>



# Current Situation in Uganda: Challenges Faced

Accessibility and Availability of Services	Cultural and Societal Barriers	Resource Limitations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Limited access to health facilities, legal aid, and counseling due to geographical barriers and inadequate infrastructure.</li><li>▪ This lack of access leaves many victims without necessary support.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Stigma and shame surrounding sexual violence discourage survivors from seeking help.</li><li>▪ Traditional beliefs and gender norms often blame victims and protect perpetrators, hindering effective support.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Limited funding and resources constrain the capacity of shelters, counseling centers, and legal aid services.</li><li>▪ Resource shortages impact the quality and reach of support provided, leaving many survivors without comprehensive assistance</li></ul>

# Conclusion

- ❑ The fight against sexual violence and trauma requires sustained efforts and robust collaboration among governmental bodies, NGOs, community leaders, and international organizations.
- ❑ By continuing to strengthen support mechanisms, addressing cultural and societal barriers, and ensuring adequate resources, we can create a safer and more supportive environment for survivors.
- ❑ Together, we can make significant strides towards eradicating gender-based violence and fostering resilience and recovery in our communities.