

## Title: challenges faced by parents of ASD children and clinicians and coping strategies adopted by parents of ASD children and clinicians in Rwanda.

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### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

- Autism: spectrum disorder (ASD) Global prevalence (1%)
- Challenges in sub Sahara Africa (SSA)
- No access to treatment in sub Sahara Africa
- No evidence based interventions in Africa
- Only one psychiatric hospital in Rwanda
- No tools and procedures for autism spectrum disorder

#### Aim:

To identify challenges faced by parents of ASD children and clinicians and coping strategies adopted by parents of ASD children and clinicians in Rwanda.

#### Research questions:

1. What are challenges faced by parents of ASD children and clinicians in Rwanda?
2. What are coping strategies parents of ASD children and clinicians in Rwanda?



### METHODS & MATERIALS

#### Participants characteristics

Parents of children who are receiving services or who have been consulted from public and private facilities and centres (government district/tertiary and specialized ASD operated by NGO in Kigali, Rwanda).

#### Inclusion criteria

- ASD school age children who received/ receiving services from the government district/tertiary and specialized ASD operated by NGO in Rwanda
  - ASD children who have a complete contact address of their respective families and communities/ villages where they are found and live.
  - ASD children aged between 4 and 12 years old.
- ASD children who will show the desire to participate in the study and who speak Kinyarwanda.
- Parents/ caregivers who live with the ASD children
  - Informed consent

#### Data collection

- Interview guide
- In-depth semi-structured, tape- recorded interviews

#### Data analysis

- Transcripts
- Thematic analysis techniques
- Codes, themes and subthemes
- Translation on themes and subthemes level
- NVivo12 software program (QSR International)
- Trustworthiness

### RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### Challenges faced by parents:

- Lack of knowledge
- Frustration regarding the ASD child
- Financial and caring burden
- Stigma

#### Challenges faced by clinicians

- Short of knowledge regarding ASD child
- Frustration
- Overworking
- Social interaction barriers

#### Coping strategies by parents of ASD children

- Self informing
- Respite services
- Reliance on God's power and traditional healers
- Acceptance

#### Coping strategies by parents of ASD children

- Self informing
- Consultation with colleagues

### SUMMARY

- Several challenges faced by parents of ASD children and clinicians in Rwanda
- Coping strategies parents of ASD children and clinicians in Rwanda
- Several similarities in term of challenges and coping strategies between parents and clinicians.