Executive Summary

Shamiri Institute is a data-driven public benefit organization that uses cutting edge social science research and a deep contextual knowledge of the communities that we work with to build a future where young people can actualize their life potential. Our mission is to develop, disseminate, and scale data-driven tools that improve the life outcomes of youths in Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond.

Because mental health prevents many young people from realizing their life outcomes, our priority is to develop and implement tools that improve the mental health and wellbeing of Africa's youths. We have developed a tool (called "Shamiri" which means "thrive" in Kiswahili) that has been found effective — through gold-standard field trials — in improving mental health, social and interpersonal relationships, and academic grades. We are now implementing and scaling up Shamiri through our innovative for-youth and by-youth platform called Project Thrive!

Shamiri Institute was founded in 2018 at Harvard University’s Department of Psychology by award-winning Kenyan entrepreneur Tom Osborn and rising global mental health researcher Katherine Venturo-Conerly. Since our founding, our tools have been used by more than 10,000 youths in Kenya. Our tools have led to a 40% improvement in mental health, a 14% improvement in peer relations, and a 3% improvement in academic grades. Over the next year, we aim to reach 25,000 youths in person and 100,000 youths digitally. Our current focus is expanding across Africa because in a continent where half the population is 19 years or younger, our potential for impact is enormous.

Website: https://www.shamiri.institute/
The Story Behind Shamiri Institute

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Shamiri Institute’s Model

**Develop, Disseminate, Scale**

To provide youths, in Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond, with data-driven tools that improve their life outcomes, Shamiri Institute have adopted a three-step approach that ensures that our tools are effective, sustainable, and can reach as many youths as possible.

**Develop**

They rely on rigorous social science research as well as a deep contextual knowledge of the communities they work with to develop tools for young people. They test their interventions in small pilots. Those that survive the pilot phase are tested in gold-standard randomized trials with extensive follow-up (often lasting many months and years).

**Disseminate**

Once interventions successfully go through gold-standard field experiments, they are refined and then Shamiri works within the local communities and existing structures to disseminate them to the real-world. During dissemination, they test out different scaling and sustainability models as well as measure implementation outcomes.

**Scale**

Finally, Shamiri Institute Asks itself: how can these Tools reach as many youths possible? The final stage of their process is scaling successful tools in a sustainable fashion. These efforts are informed by findings from the dissemination phase and a commitment to sustainability and Amplifying our impact in the lives of young people.
Impact

- 5,500+ Shamiri sessions with 10,000+ youths in Kenya.
- Through Shamiri, young people have experienced a 40% improvement in mental health and wellbeing, a 14% improvement in social relations, and a 3% improvement in academic grades.
- This year, Shamiri Institute aims to bring Shamiri to 25,000 youths in-person.
- Shamiri Institute has conducted 5 gold-standard trials with >5,000 youths.
- Their team has published 15+ articles in leading peer-reviewed journals worldwide.
- With a commitment to open-science, data from our studies is publicly available.