

Sintayehu Gultae Eshete
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PERSONAL PROFILE

A highly motivated and dedicated Clinical Psychologist with over five years of comprehensive experience in mental health, psychosocial support (MHPSS), and humanitarian interventions in emergency contexts. Possessing a strong foundation in both clinical practice and academic research, evidenced by significant engagement in local and international research projects, community service initiatives, and university-level teaching. Eager to leverage extensive field experience with vulnerable populations, including IDPs and refugees, and a proven ability in qualitative research methodologies, project coordination, and capacity building to pursue doctoral research focused on the critical mental health sequelae of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) among survivors in Ethiopia's Tigray region. I am committed to contributing rigorous, impactful research to the field of global mental health.

Work Experience

Dates | **June 2021 – Present**

Occupation or position held | **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Counsellor**

Main activities and responsibilities |

- Providing direct psychosocial support and counselling to individuals with mental illness, many of whom are survivors of conflict-related trauma, including potential GBV survivors, within IDP settings in Tigray.
- Designing, implementing, and supervising age and culturally appropriate MHPSS activities, including child-friendly spaces (CFS), drama, and art interventions sensitive to trauma.
- Developing and delivering mental health awareness sessions, community sensitization campaigns, and psychoeducational materials relevant to trauma and resilience.
- Conducting community mobilization, monitoring referred cases (including those with severe distress potentially linked to GBV), and submitting detailed weekly progress reports.
- Representing IOM in MHPSS technical working groups, contributing to coordinated responses for vulnerable populations.

Name and address of employer | **International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mekelle Sub Office, Tigray, Ethiopia**

Type of business or sector | Humanitarian Aid, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

Dates | **June 2020 – June 2021**

Occupation or position held | **Psychologist**

Main activities and responsibilities |

- Delivered individual, family, and group therapy to IDPs and vulnerable host communities in Tigray, addressing trauma, anxiety, and depression, often in contexts where GBV was prevalent.

- Provided ongoing supervision, leadership, and capacity building for stakeholders and internal staff on MHPSS best practices for conflict-affected populations.
- Conducted outreach activities, home visits, and led community sensitization campaigns on mental health and coping mechanisms.
- Represented the organization in coordination meetings and attended trainings relevant to mental health in emergencies.

Name and address of employer | **ABH Partners PLC / UNICEF, Abi Adi General Hospital and IDP sites, Tigray, Ethiopia**

Type of business or sector | Healthcare, Humanitarian Aid, Mental Health

Dates | **August 2011 – Present**

Occupation or position held | **Lecturer**

Main activities and responsibilities |

- Teaching undergraduate courses in Psychology and related Social Sciences.
- Supervising student research projects, fostering academic inquiry into social and psychological issues.
- Actively engaging in departmental research initiatives and community service projects (see Research section).
- Contributing to curriculum development and academic committees.

Name and address of employer | **Mekelle University, College of Social Sciences and Languages, Mekelle, Tigray, Ethiopia**

Type of business or sector | Higher Education

Dates | **October 2018 – October 2019**

Occupation or position held | **Head, Research and Community Services**

Main activities and responsibilities |

- Chaired the college's research and community service committee, managing budgets and strategic direction.
- Coordinated the evaluation, registration, and implementation monitoring of research and community service projects, many addressing pressing social and health issues.
- Led the dissemination of research findings and community service outcomes to academic and public audiences.

Name and address of employer | **Mekelle University, College of Social Sciences and Languages, Mekelle, Tigray, Ethiopia**

Type of business or sector | Higher Education Management

Dates | **February 2021 – May 2021**

Occupation or position held | **Enumerator**

Main activities and responsibilities |

- Collected pertinent data on displacement and returnees in conflict-affected areas of Tigray, using digital tools (ODK, Kobo).
- Communicated sensitively with displaced persons, community members, and humanitarian partners.
- Identified trustworthy information sources and key informants for data collection at various administrative levels.
- Reported findings to supervisors, contributing to evidence on conflict dynamics.

Name and address of employer | **Trias Consult Ltd., United Kingdom (working in Tigray, Ethiopia)**

Type of business or sector | Research Consultancy, Conflict Analysis

Dates | **June 2019 – February 2020**

Occupation or position held | **Researcher**

Main activities and responsibilities |

- Contributed to a project on "Refugees for Development," focusing on livelihood considerations among Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia.
- Conducted and managed Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).
- Engaged in community mobilization and liaised with government officials, community leaders, and youth/women associations.

Name and address of employer | **Norwegian Research Institution (Fafo), Bergen, Norway (fieldwork in Ethiopia)**

Type of business or sector | Research Institution

Dates | **October 2019 – October 2020**

Occupation or position held | **Guidance and Counselling Services Coordinator**

Main activities and responsibilities |

- Designed mental health materials and organized psychosocial activities for university youth.
- Managed awareness campaigns and community sensitization on mental wellbeing within the university.

Name and address of employer | **Mekelle University, Mekelle, Tigray, Ethiopia**

Type of business or sector | Higher Education Support Services

Dates | **June 2010 – April 2011**

Occupation or position held | **Child Protection Officer**

Main activities and responsibilities |

- Provided counselling for unaccompanied children in a refugee camp setting, addressing trauma and displacement.
- Managed child-friendly spaces and facilitated art/drama projects for psychosocial support.

- Handled and reported child protection issues.
Name and address of employer | **Abraham's Oasis, Mayayni Refugee Camp, Shire, Tigray, Ethiopia**
Type of business or sector | Child Protection, Humanitarian Aid

Dates | **January 2020 – June 2022**

Occupation or position held | **Radio Host and Producer, Mestyat Psychology Radio Program**

Main activities and responsibilities |

- Hosted and produced a weekly community radio program disseminating psychological knowledge and promoting mental health awareness.
Name and address of employer | **Momona FM 96.4 Community Radio, Mekelle, Tigray, Ethiopia**
Type of business or sector | Media, Public Health Communication

Education and Training

Dates | **June 2015**

Title of qualification awarded | **Master of Arts (M.A.) in Clinical Psychology**

Principal subjects/occupational skills covered | Clinical assessment, psychopathology, psychotherapeutic interventions (individual, group, family), research methods in psychology, psychological testing.

Name and type of organisation providing education and training | **Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

Level in national or international classification | Postgraduate Degree (Master's)

Dates | **October 2013**

Title of qualification awarded | **Master of Arts (M.A.) in Social Psychology (Coursework Completed)**

Principal subjects/occupational skills covered | Social cognition, group dynamics, intergroup relations, attitudes and persuasion, research methods in social psychology.

Name and type of organisation providing education and training | **Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

Level in national or international classification | Postgraduate Coursework

Dates | **November 2018**

Title of qualification awarded | **Higher Diploma in Teaching**

Principal subjects/occupational skills covered | Pedagogy, curriculum development, assessment methods, classroom management.

Name and type of organization providing education and training | **Mekelle University, Mekelle, Ethiopia**

Level in national or international classification | Postgraduate Diploma

Dates | **August 2007**

Title of qualification awarded | **Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Theatre Arts (with Distinction)**

Principal subjects/occupational skills covered | Performance, directing, scriptwriting, theatre for development, communication arts.

Name and type of organisation providing education and training | **Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

Level in national or international classification | Undergraduate Degree (Bachelor's)

Clinical Internships & Voluntary Experience

Dates | **September 2018 – June 2020**

Title | **Clinical Psychologist (Volunteer)**

Organization | Ayder Comprehensive Specialized Hospital, Department of Psychiatry, Mekelle University

Activities | Provided psychosocial support, group & individual therapy; conducted training and case presentations.

Dates | **March 2015 – July 2015**

Title | **Clinical Psychology Intern**

Organization | Center for Victims of Trauma, Mayayni Refugee Camp

Activities | Individual, group, family therapy for trauma survivors; structured diagnostic interviewing; risk assessments; training delivery; awareness creation.

Dates | **December 2014 – March 2015**

Title | **Clinical Psychology Intern**

Organization | St. Paul Millennium Medical College, Department of Psychiatry

Activities | Individual, group, family therapy; structured diagnostic interviewing; risk assessments; report writing.

Dates | **August 2014 – November 2014**

Title | **Clinical Psychology Intern**

Organization | Yekatit 12 Hospital Medical College, Department of Psychiatry

Activities | Individual, group, family therapy; structured diagnostic interviewing; risk assessments; report writing.

Personal Skills

Mother tongue(s) | **Tigrigna, Amharic**

Other language(s) | **English**

Self-assessment | Understanding | Speaking | Writing

European level () | *Listening / Reading / Spoken interaction / Spoken production*

English | *C2 Proficient User / C2 Proficient User / C1 Proficient User / C1 Proficient User / C1*

Proficient User

() Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Ethiopian Sign Language

Self-assessment | Understanding | Speaking | Writing

European level (*) | Listening | Reading | Spoken interaction | Spoken production

Ethiopian Sign Language | B1 Independent User | B1 Independent User | A2 Basic User | A2 Basic User
| N/A (typically not written)

Communication skills |

- Excellent interpersonal and cross-cultural communication skills developed through extensive work with diverse and vulnerable populations, including IDPs, refugees, and conflict-affected communities in Tigray.
- Proficient in conducting sensitive interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) for research and clinical assessment, vital for understanding GBV experiences.
- Experienced in community mobilization, awareness creation, and delivering psychoeducational trainings to diverse audiences.
- Effective public speaking and presentation skills, honed through academic lecturing and radio broadcasting on mental health.
- Active listening skills crucial for therapeutic interventions and qualitative data gathering.

Organizational / managerial skills |

- Proven ability to coordinate and manage research and community service projects (e.g., as Head of Research and Community Services, Mekelle University).
- Experience in designing, planning, and implementing MHPSS programs and activities, including managing child-friendly spaces.
- Skilled in budget management, project monitoring, and reporting.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively within multidisciplinary teams in high-pressure emergency settings.
- Strong time-management and organizational skills to handle multiple tasks effectively.

Job-related skills |

- **Specialized knowledge in MHPSS for conflict-affected populations:** Extensive experience in providing psychosocial support in emergency and post-conflict settings in Tigray.
- **Trauma-informed care:** Skilled in working with individuals and communities affected by trauma, including understanding the potential mental health impact of GBV.
- **Qualitative Research:** Proficient in designing and conducting qualitative research, including thematic analysis, particularly relevant for exploring nuanced experiences of GBV survivors.

- **Community-based participatory approaches:** Experience using participatory methods (e.g., drama, community discussions) for awareness and intervention, applicable to GBV prevention and support.
- **Capacity Building:** Experience in training and supervising staff and stakeholders on MHPSS principles and practices.
- **Needs Assessment & Program Design:** Ability to assess mental health needs within communities and design appropriate interventions.
- **Ethical Conduct in Research and Practice:** Deep understanding of ethical considerations when working with vulnerable individuals, particularly survivors of violence.

Digital skills |

- **Microsoft Office Suite:** Proficient (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook)
 - **Data Collection Software:** Proficient (ODK, KoboToolbox)
 - **Statistical Software:** [SPSS]
 - **Internet Research & Communication:** Proficient
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RESEARCH EXPERIENCE & PUBLICATIONS

Manuscript Under Review

- Sintayehu Gultae Eshete (2024). "'This is Half-Life': Common Challenges and Coping Mechanisms among Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Tigray, Ethiopia - A Qualitative Thematic Analysis.' Submitted to *Journal of East African Studies* (May 10, 2024).

Research Projects

- **Principal Investigator** | *The grief of older adults and its consequences on their mental health: exploring lived experience* (2020-2021). Mekelle University. (Demonstrates PI capability and mental health focus).
- **Researcher** | *Refugees for Development: Nexus of Humanitarian Assistance and Development* (2019-2021). University of Bergen & Fafo, Norway. (Experience with international research and vulnerable populations).
- **Enumerator** | *Cross-border conflict evidence, policy and Trends programme- Tigray Surge Support* (Feb 2021 - May 2021). Trias Consult Ltd (UK). (Data collection in conflict/Tigray context).
- **Co-Investigator** | *Study on socio-psychological impacts of Covid-19 towards women: the case of Mekelle city* (2020-2021). Mekelle University. (Focus on women's psychosocial health).

- **Co-Investigator** | *Creating Awareness on Impacts of Irregular Migration through Participatory Drama (Theatre for Development)* (2018-2019). Mekelle University. (Participatory methods for social issues).
- **Co-Investigator** | *Attitudinal Change towards Begging through Awareness Creation in the form of Participatory Drama* (2019-2020). Mekelle University. (Community-based intervention).

Conferences & Workshops

- Workshop: Embedding Social Sciences in One Health: Strengthening capacity in the Horn of Africa | Nov 18-20, 2019 | ILRI, Addis Ababa.
- Conference: 20th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies (ICES20) | Aug 01-05, 2018 | Mekelle University.

Certifications & Training

- Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) | July 2021 | IOM, Mekelle. (*Relevant to GBV*)
- Certificate: Ethiopian Sign Languages | Nov 2022 | IOM, Mekelle.
- Certificate: Counselling Modules: General Introduction | Apr 2015 | The Centre for Victims of Trauma, Mayayni.
- Certificate: Migration Processes and Practices: Theories, Methods and Ethical Conduct | June 2019 | Bergen Summer Research School, University of Bergen, Norway.
- Certificate: Training for Enumerators: Conflict Sensitive Data Collection | Feb 2021 | Trias Consult Ltd, UK.
- Certificate of Appreciation: Global Mental Health Day Celebration | Oct 2021 | IOM, Mekelle.

Professional Memberships

- Ethiopian Psychologists' Association (EPA) | March 2018 – Present.

References

- **Dr. Thera Mjaaland (PhD)**, Associate Professor
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