VALIDATED SCREENING TOOLS
for common mental disorders in low- and middle-income countries

FINDINGS FROM A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF 153 STUDIES

273 screening tools validated* for use in 36 countries

- 66 studies from Asia
- 40 studies from Africa
- 46 studies from South and Central America
- 36 studies from Eastern and Central Europe

* Validated screening tools are tools that have been tested within the local context against a gold standard diagnostic interview administered by a medical professional.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. VALIDATE WHERE POSSIBLE
   Wherever possible, a chosen screening tool should be validated against a gold standard diagnostic assessment in the specific context in which it will be employed.

2. CHECK THE DATABASE OF TOOLS
   If validating your own screening tool isn’t possible, check the database to see if a tool has already been validated for the country and context in which you’re working:

3. USE THE FOLLOWING GUIDE TO AID YOUR SELECTION
   In general some tools tend to perform better than others for different disorders:

   **COMMON MENTAL DISORDERS**
   - General: Tool: GHQ-12
   - With physical illness: Tool: SRQ-20

   **DEPRESSIVE DISORDERS ONLY**
   - General: Tool: HADS-D
   - With good literacy levels: Tool: PHQ-9
   - Perinatal: Tool: EPDS

   **ANXIETY DISORDERS ONLY**
   - Tool: HADS-A

   **MORE VALIDATION STUDIES ARE NEEDED**
   Most screening tools in the review focussed on depressive disorders

   - 61 Any common mental disorder
   - 175 Depressive disorders only
   - 24 Anxiety only
   - 13 Post-traumatic distress disorders only

   More child and adolescent screening tools are needed

   - 11% children and adolescent common mental disorder screening tools
   - 20 - 50% proportion of the total population under age 15 in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

Source

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