



JHU - CERTI UPDATE

The Johns Hopkins University (JHU), Center for Refugee and Disaster Studies
Complex Emergency Relief and Transition Initiative (CERTI)



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ABOUT CERTI

The "Complex Emergency Response and Transition Initiative (**CERTI**)" is an interagency initiative funded in part by **USAID**. This initiative addresses the challenges of programming international assistance to achieve health security within the context of increasingly frequent and severe conflict-related crises (complex emergencies) in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). **CERTI** has two major objectives:

1. To establish broad-based international consensus on best practices during and following complex emergencies (CEs); and
2. To strengthen the capacity of various implementing organizations which provide public health interventions in crisis and post-crisis contexts.

This initiative responds to the increasing demand and need for linking relief with development programming in SSA. To learn more about **CERTI**, visit the **CERTI** web page at:
<http://payson.tulane.edu/CERTI/default.htm>

ABOUT JHU-CERTI

The **Johns Hopkins University** School of Public Health, Center for Refugee and Disaster Studies is a **CERTI** collaborating institution. The goal of **JHU-CERTI** is improving the health status of populations in transition by strengthening the capacity of NGOs to assist populations in transition through:

- better operational research capacity;
- improved planning and management;
- stronger service delivery.

JHU-CERTI's strategy is to:

- work with NGOs to conduct operations research;
- develop standardized training courses to facilitate field research activities;
- to serve as an operations research technical resource for PVOs/NGOs working with transitional populations.

JHU-CERTI has completed the following products and activities to date:

- Training package in qualitative research methods for PVOs/NGOs;
- Data bank on training materials developed for displaced populations;
- Methodology to assess burden of community psychosocial problems;
- Rapid Assessment Procedure (RAP) to assess the perceived needs and context of refugees and IDPs;
- Forced Migration Demography study.

Forthcoming **JHU-CERTI** activities:

- Review, field-testing and revision of Rapid Assessment Procedure (RAP);
- Review and revision of psycho social assessment methodology;
- Technical support of PVOs/NGOs working with transition populations.

Visit us at the **Center for Refugee and Disaster Studies** web site:

<http://www.jhsph.edu/refugee/default.html>

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Paul Bolton met with **Lincoln Ndogoni**, the director of **World Vision's** psychosocial support program in Rwanda, and with the Director and deputy director of the **Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma**. The aim of the meeting was to discuss planning a meeting to be held later in the year, to review the field trial (method and results) of the cross-cultural psychosocial assessment conducted with **World Vision** in Rwanda in Nov-Dec 1999.

Such a meeting would include a review of the field trial, with recommendations for further research and suggested approaches that NGOs could apply to assist persons with severe psychosocial problems. Issues discussed included who to invite to the meeting, and when it should be held. the **Harvard** team favor a larger meeting including representatives of donor organizations, to generate enthusiasm for science-based psychosocial assessment.

Paul began revising the Rwanda report in the light of feedback from **Nancy Mock**, and had preliminary discussions with potential donors for a continuation of the development of the psychosocial assessment methodology.

Paul also helped **Bill Weiss** complete the report, *Impact of the Training in Qualitative Research Methods for PVOs/NGOs*. This report evaluated the training **JHU-CERTI** provided to NGOs in Africa in 1998-99. The results of the training evaluation indicate that the training has improved decision-making and programming among transition programs and has increased community participation in program planning, monitoring and evaluation.

This week, **Bill** also began contacting potential technical reviewers of the Rapid Assessment Procedures (RAP) developed by **JHU-CERTI**. Our plan is to hold a technical review meeting of the RAP in May prior to additional field-tests of the methodology. If you know of good candidates for technical reviewers (preferably those in the DC area who can more easily attend the review meeting) please let **Bill** know.

The *JHU-CERTI UPDATE* is published by the JHU Center for Refugee and Disaster Studies. If you have questions or comments about this *Update*, please contact Bill Weiss at bweiss@jhsph.edu or 1-410-614-6172.