Reviewer’s report

Title: Post-conflict mental health needs: A cross-sectional survey of trauma, depression and associated factors in Juba, Southern Sudan.

Version: 1 Date: 5 November 2008

Reviewer: Unni Karunakara

Reviewer’s report:

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The literature on forced migration and mental health is not extensive. The study therefore is an important one, assessing the prevalence of PTSD and Depression in a post-conflict community. The difficulties involved in carrying out such a survey should not be underestimated and I comment the authors in carrying out a well thought-out and analyzed study.

The major limitation of the study is the lack of assessment of function. Assessing function and coping strategies would have added considerably to the study and strengthened any recommendations for policy or action.

The authors acknowledge and cite previous work done in the field. The introduction should have ideally included a background on the conflict and post-conflict situation in Juba as well a discussion on the implications of the study.

- Major Compulsory Revisions

None

- Minor Compulsory Revisions

1. A short history of the conflict with available data on forced migration should be included in Introduction. This will help contextualize the results of the survey.
2. Also, briefly discuss the state of security, health and other social services in Juba Town.
3. What is the break down by ethnic groups in Juba and is the distribution reflected in data presented in Table 2?
4. In the Methods section, describe the continuous outcome measure on which sampling calculations were made.
5. Elaborate EPI method used for selection of households
6. The Methods section should be abridged
7. Restatement of results in the discussion section is unnecessary. The results
should be discussed in depth. For instance;

a. How do the results reflect the nature of life in Juba?
b. How do the current levels of PTSD and depression affect the rebuilding of post-conflict societies, as stated in the introduction?
c. What are the current gaps in services and what specific actions need to be taken?

- Discretionary Revisions

1. A brief review of the literature on PTSD, Depression and other psychiatric morbidities in complex emergencies, after the introduction section, will add to the results and discussion of mental health in South Sudan

What next?

- Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of Interest

- An article of importance in its field

Quality of Written English

- Needs some minor language and spelling corrections before being published

Statistical Review

- Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics

Declaration of Competing Interests

- I declare that I have no competing interests.