Reviewer’s report

Title: Exposures to war-related traumatic events and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms among displaced Darfuri female university students: An exploratory study

Version: 3 Date: 21 May 2012

Reviewer: Egbert Sondorp

Reviewer’s report:

1. The authors have responded to my concerns in a very thoughtful way and have adjusted the text extensively, in a positive way. In particular the discussion is much enriched.

2. While I also appreciate the answers to the ethical concerns I raised and feel that the authors have genuinely dealt with the underlying concern, they inherently are not able to take away the concern that the very publication will stigmatise the study population (see copy of my initial concern at the bottom of the message). That this group is 'already stigmatised' as authors claim, does not really make a difference.

The author's argument that the ethical committee of the AUW did approve the study and that participants were informed is only partly valid, in that only the very outcome of the study, with so many of the Darfuri students proving to have PTSD symptoms, causes this risk of 'stigmatization' of the whole group, an element that was probably difficult to foresee at the time of ethical approval or asking consent to participants.

The study itself as input in wider research that may be beneficial to the participants may act as counterweight to my concern. Nevertheless, I think it might be wise for editors to have a second opinion on this aspect from an expert.