

Volume 7, Number 3

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From the editor

This issue is dedicated to combined qualitative and quantitative research. This is highly relevant for a journal that aims to combine theory and practice and wishes to link academic debate and theory with the experiences of fieldworkers and project implementers. As always, the manuscripts for this issue have been externally reviewed by three anonymous peer reviewers. This time they have also been rigorously evaluated by our guest editors. Our three guest editors are excellent researchers who are all involved in applied research, in collaboration with service providers, usually local or international NGOs (non governmental organisations). *Paul Bolton* is associated with the Center for Refugee and Disaster Response at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. His main areas of expertise are in the use of applied research methods, both qualitative and quantitative. In the course of his work on programme evaluation, Dr. Bolton has conducted randomised controlled trials on interventions in Africa, Asia, and currently in the Middle East. *Wietse A. Tol*, is a technical advisor at HealthNet TPO where he focuses on the design and evaluation of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in humanitarian settings. His recent PhD

dissertation entailed qualitative and quantitative research to conceptualise and evaluate MHPSS for torture survivors in Nepal and war affected children in Burundi, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka. *Judith Bass* is with the Department of Mental Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Her major area of interest is designing and evaluating methods for assessing mental health and mental illness in non Western cultures with the intention of using these assessments to improve prevention and intervention strategies. She has been involved in several controlled trials in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The collection of articles in this issue is unique, as the manuscripts combine academic excellence with practical relevance.

With this issue we have completed the seventh volume of *Intervention*. In those seven years the journal has grown from a local initiative in Sri Lanka to a well read global journal in the emerging field of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support. Our little journal is increasingly being cited in other publications, including major medical journals, and used as an educational tool in training courses all over the world. *Intervention* is published by the War Trauma Foundation (the Netherlands). This organisation is dedicated to providing support and capacity building to local aid agencies providing psychosocial care for the recovery of children, families and communities impacted by war and organized violence throughout the world. New partners in financial support for the publication of the journal include the Dutch NGOs *Cordaid* and *Health.Net TPO*. *Cordaid* is one of the biggest international development organisations in the world, with a network of partner organisations in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The partner

organisations of *Cordaid* work on various themes, including health and wellbeing, and several of them are active in the field of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support.

The other new partner, *Health.Net TPO*, is a Netherlands based organisation working in countries that have been disrupted by war, disasters and poverty. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support is one the main focal areas for *Health.Net TPO*, with particular attention to community based psychosocial initiatives and the integration of mental health into basic health care structures. In the last few years, *Intervention* has regularly published articles of authors who work for initiatives that are supported by *Cordaid* or *Health.Net TPO*. The financial support of these organisations ensures that we can continue to cover the costs related to the production of the journal, as well as the related training manuals, and that the journal will be distributed among relevant partner organisations in low and middle income countries. The technical part of the production remains with *Lippincott Williams & Wilkins*, a unit of *Wolters Kluwer Health* that publishes numerous journals in the field of health care. Through the generous support of *Lippincott Williams & Wilkins* we are able to distribute hundreds of free hard copies of the journal to practitioners and local organisations in low and middle income countries. The distribution list has recently been updated, and we have been able to add many new addresses in places that are usually under served, from Afghanistan to Somalia, and from Burundi to Zimbabwe. I would like to conclude with an unusual, but well deserved, 'thank you' to the managing editor *Mindy Ran*, to our webmaster *Jay McLellan-Verhoeven* (see www.intervention-journal.com) and to my colleagues on the

editorial board (*Florence Baingana, Ananda Galappatti, Ton Haans, Pau Pérez-Sales, Relinde Reiffers, Sivayokan and Guus van der Veer*) for their continuous commitment and hard work. Thank you very much! I hope the next seven years of *Intervention* will be as fruitful and exciting as the first seven years!

Peter Ventevogel
Editor-in-chief

This special issue is financially supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. This is the world's largest humanitarian organisation and we are proud of the unrestricted grant that made it possible to make more copies of this issue of the journal.

Message from the IFRC

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) believes that applying a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods when designing or evaluating psychosocial and mental health programmes is important for several reasons. Methodologically speaking, it is acknowledged that psychosocial support interventions must be designed according to the social and cultural context of programme implementation. Because of the qualitative focus of most psychosocial programmes, it is often not possible to apply quantitative indicators as it is done for other sectors. Combining qualitative and quantitative research methods enhances accountability to stakeholders, as there is increased evidence that being able to document the programmes is making a difference in the lives of those who participate. It thus becomes easier to engage in discussions of various stakeholders, from funding agencies, who would like to see that their input makes a difference, to beneficiaries who are able to follow the result of a programme. Using this combined approach addresses the current gap that exists between research and practice, it will strengthen the evidence base and ensure that future programmes are informed by lessons learned from programmes that are being or have been implemented.

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