

Developing and Implementing an Integrated System for Providing
Resilience-Based Trauma Assessment and Counseling to Palestinian Children

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Abstract

This project is on developing and implementing a system for providing psychological assessment and counseling to Palestinian children who have experienced the trauma of war. This system is based on the author's work in developing assessment procedures and counseling approaches for children in the aftermath of disasters in South Asia, Mexico, and Haiti. The author has developed a cultural adaptation of the House-Tree-Person (HTP) test to measure objectively Vulnerability related to trauma and Resilience related to positive adaptation (Roysircar, Colvin, Afolayan, Thompson, & Robertson, 2016). It is an efficient assessment of children's drawings upon which subsequent therapeutic work may be based. The assessment can be taught easily and efficiently to Palestinian counselors on the ground. Funding has been provided by the American Psychological Foundation (2015-2016) to translate professionally, using back translations methods, the HTP test and associated scoring and interpretation materials, as well as several short, survey instruments on children's trauma, self-esteem, and collective self-concept. Translations have been completed. A focus group of Palestinian school counselors will evaluate the assessment protocol's face and content validity. Subsequently, ten school counselors in Jerusalem/Ramallah will receive training in the administration and scoring of the instruments and will pilot the testing materials with 100 Palestinian school children. Data from Palestinian school children will be subjected to a small evaluation study on the reliability of counselors' scorings of HTP drawings, and the HTP scores' correlations with self-report measures. The translations and administration of the tests will be modified based on results. Subsequent to the completion of this

first phase, later phases will be devoted to developing Palestinian norms to aid interpretations, developing a counseling model aligned with the assessments, live training of counselors, setting up a data management system to monitor and continuously improve assessment and counseling practices, and evaluating counseling outcomes.