



**I-CARE**

The International Counseling, Advocacy, Research, & Education Project

Fall 2008 Report  
October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Our I-CARE group continues to be active. This report will focus on the summer and early fall activities. Nancy and I journeyed to Botswana in August. We expected to start our work with a workshop in the capital city of Gaborone. However, when we arrived the workshop organizer had been robbed of a very significant amount of money and important papers, including his passport, so the final arrangements were not made and we had to focus on other activities. That was a disappointment but not a real problem because we had other things to accomplish.

We had a series of meetings with our colleagues at the Institute for Development Management (IDM). We began with the top management of IDM, who are very pleased that we have a collaborative effort. That meeting was largely ceremonial, but I think quite important, in that without the blessings of the top administrators, the project teams would simply not be able to be able to be as cooperative.

Following the meeting with top administrators we met with Paul Tebatso and his team for an extended period of time where we planned some of the logistic for the survey of those who have been trained to be AIDS counselors throughout Botswana. One of the advantages of working with IDM is that their mandate is to cover the entire country. Paul has been recently promoted to a more senior position and has several new staff members that he wanted us to interact with. We had a series of discussions that helped us understand the needs of the frontline training staff and for them to become well acquainted with what we are about.

Our work with IDM has already been productive and I think will be much more so as time goes by. They clearly value interacting with I-CARE individuals and we are talking about a series of studies that we jointly will be able to carry on. They were very pleased with the work of Dawn Smith our public health student who spent a semester interning at IDM. We will try and send other students in the future.

In addition to IDM, we continued our involvement with colleagues at the University of Botswana. They have sponsored the workshops that we have carried out in the country with our own training. This year, our colleague Amy Nitza, is serving as a Fulbright Fellow at the University Center for HIV/AIDS. She also is teaching a counseling course each semester in the Counseling Program. She is working on a 6 country survey of college student's knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and practices towards HIV/AIDS. We are providing technical assistance to her. Having Amy who is on the faculty at our Fort Wayne campus, spending a year in Botswana is extremely helpful to us. She will be working with the IDM folks as well as her regular assignments at the university. In

addition, she and I are developing a workshop model based on our various experiences. We will test it out in the spring semester and early summer.

Finally, we also met with the staff of Mahalapye Rehabilitation Center. Situated in the middle of the country in the town of Mahalapye, the center works with developmentally disadvantage children and adults. They have been very poorly funded and are struggling for existence. However, they were able to secure a large construction grant from one of the diamond mines in Botswana, which has enabled them to start construction on a very much improved building. They have been able to also secure partial support for equipment but still need help in securing equipment which will help them provide a quality service. After a long journey to Mahalapye we toured the facility and went to home visits. We were very well received. After our tour, the staff took us to lunch and we discussed ways that I-CARE could be helpful to this program.

What they asked of I-CARE is that we provide counseling training for their staff and other developmental centers throughout Botswana and also that we assist them with various evaluations of their service. In the large new building that they will have there is a designated area for training purposes. They are very eager to have us begin work with them and we have agreed to do that.

As can be seen, we had a productive and busy time in Botswana, even though we were disappointed that our usual workshop was not able to take place due to the robbery of our colleague. Although I am well aware of the importance of consulting with and providing technical support to programs, I still very much enjoy the hands on work of actual training. However, that will have to wait until our next trip. At a later date, I will report on some of the activities of other I-CARE colleagues. In the meantime, we very much appreciate your support.

Cordially,

Rex

Rex Stockton  
Chancellors Professor  
I-CARE Director  
Indiana University