

Separated Children Case Study I Identification and Documentation -

Assignment: Having read the required readings and viewed the global lecture, Global classroom groups assigned to Case Study I should read the Child's Story below and answer the following two questions related to identification of separated children:

What do you need to find out about Jean-Claude?
How are you going to find answers to these questions?

THE CHILD'S STORY

My name is Jean-Claude and I am eight years old. Before the war I lived with my parents, my two sisters and two little brothers up on a hillside. On a clear day you could see the mountains in the far distance from our house. One day there was fighting all around our house. I didn't know what was happening. I was afraid and I couldn't see my parents. I managed to pick up my three-year-old brother Emile, who was on the ground crying. I also grabbed one blanket, a mat, a pot, a plate and a few heads of corn.

We headed in the direction that I thought the rest of the village would have taken, but we found ourselves on our own. We didn't know where our parents, sisters or brother were. We were particularly worried about our brother Pascal, who was only two years old and might be lost. Eventually we arrived at a river, where you could pay to get a boat across. We were told that on the other side, 10 km further on, there was a camp where you could get food from the Red Cross. Since we had no money, we had to give up our only saucepan to be able to get across. By the time we got to the other side there were thousands of people, some sick, some walking very slowly, others rushing around frantically. We kept asking about our family, but no one knew them. Emile would often cry and I would try to comfort him.

A few kilometres on there was a narrow bridge that everyone was trying to cross at the same time. It was the rainy season and the ground was slippery with deep mud.

We were all squashed together – men, women, children and even some goats – trying to edge forwards. I tried to hold on tightly to Emile's hand. Suddenly there was panic because someone heard shooting. Some people pushed forwards, others backwards. Emile's hand had slipped from mine. I shouted his name many times, but I could not see or hear him. I ran backwards to see if he was there. I then ran in the other direction, but there was no sign of him. In the panic some people had jumped into the river and drowned. I prayed that Emile was not among them, and that some kind family had found him and comforted him. I climbed a small tree, hoping that I would be able to see Emile if he went by. Eventually I decided to make my way towards the Red Cross camp. When I got there I was so exhausted that I just found a corner and went to sleep.

Early the next morning, just as it was getting light, an adult came up to me and asked me if I had lost my family. At first I was scared to answer, since I didn't know who this person was. Then I saw that they were wearing the badge of an organisation, and they explained that they were looking for children on their own so that they could help them find their families again.

Separated Children Case Study II Tracing

Assignment: Having read the required readings and viewed the global lecture, Global classroom groups assigned to Case Study II should read the Child's Story below and answer the following three questions related to family tracing:

What steps would you take in order to try to trace Jean-Claude's family?

What factors may hinder you in this tracing process?

If resources are limited how would you prioritise activities?

THE CHILD'S STORY

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Case Study III Verification-

Assignment: Having read the required readings and viewed the global lecture, Global classroom groups assigned to Case Study III should read the Child's Story below and answer the following three questions related to verification:

When and where should verification be carried out?

How should verification be carried out?

What are some of the issues that might arise from verification which will require further action?

THE CHILD'S STORY

After people from the agency wrote down information about my lost family, I was put in a tent with children from the same area that we came from. Some were very young and didn't know which village they came from. I did see, sitting quietly in the corner, one little girl, Rosette, from our home village, who my brother used to play with. I excitedly told the woman who was looking after us that I knew the girl. But the woman said that it was better for her to stay there at the camp, since the girl hadn't said herself which village she was from, and they didn't want to send her to the wrong place. I was upset that the woman didn't believe me. But at least I could tell the girl's family back home that I had seen her and that she was alive.

The people in the camp told me to wait, since each day children arrived who had been found along the road. The next morning I waited eagerly as more and more people came to the camp. Finally, in the afternoon I spotted Emile holding the hand of a young boy who had just reached the camp. I shouted his name and ran up. At first he just looked straight ahead, as if he wasn't aware of anything around him. Suddenly he looked up, realised it was me and jumped into my arms. The older boy with him saw that I was clean and had nice clothes on, so he asked where he could also get help. I said that the foreigners organising the place for separated children gave out biscuits, clothes and soap. I wanted to help this boy, called Michel, who had helped my brother. He said that his aunt was on the other side of the camp, but that he wasn't with his parents. So I said that he should say that he is separated, and then he could join us and be taken home in a bus. So he did that, and was able to get some nice new clothes like us.

For a few months Emile and I stayed at the camp, along with our new friend Michel. Finally we were able to return to the provinces we came from. All the children from our province were taken in a big truck to the same children's centre. There we bumped into other children from our village, who had also lost their families. Every day social workers from organisations would come and collect children and take them back to their village if their relatives had been found. No one knew whose turn it would be the next day, so we just hoped it would be ours. We were happy to see other children go home, but didn't understand why it took so long for us. Maybe all our relatives had been killed, or they didn't want us back in the village.

Eventually, after five weeks we were told that, although our parents had not been found, there was an aunt and our sisters who were back in the village. We were happy to know that we would soon be back with our sisters, but worried about where our parents and little brother Pascal might be. Also, my aunt was very sick and I didn't know how she would be able to look after us two and my sisters. Before we went to the village, the social workers showed us a photograph of our aunt and asked if we recognised her and wanted to go and stay with her. Of course I said yes, since I wanted to see my sisters again, although I didn't know how my aunt would cope.

After a few weeks back in the village, we were told by the local district leader that there would be visits organised to special children's centres for people who had lost very small children. Eventually the day came when the bus came to our village. I went off with my aunt to see if we would be able to find Pascal. We arrived at the centre and were asked many questions about my brother, such as his age and what he was wearing when we got separated from each other. We were then asked to look along a row of several children of similar age to Pascal. Towards the end of the line we eventually saw him. At first he didn't realise it was us, but then we began to sing his favourite song to him and he began to cry and hold on to us very tightly. We were then asked to put our thumbprint on a special form to show that we had found our brother. I don't know who the form was for – maybe for the children's centre – and then we went home in the bus.

Separated Children Case Study IV Re-unification –

Assignment: Having read the required readings and viewed the global lecture, Global classroom groups assigned to Case Study IV should read the Child's Story below and answer the following three questions related to re-unification:

What preparation for the family and for the children will be necessary for this reunification to take place successfully?

What key elements should be included in the actual re-unification of the family with the children?

What sort of follow-up might be required for the children and for the family?

THE CHILD'S STORY

After people from the agency wrote down information about my lost family, I was put in a tent with children from the same area that we came from. Some were very young and didn't know which village they came from. I did see, sitting quietly in the corner, one little girl, Rosette, from our home village, who my brother used to play with. I excitedly told the woman who was looking after us that I knew the girl. But the woman said that it was better for her to stay there at the camp, since the girl hadn't said herself which village she was from, and they didn't want to send her to the wrong place. I was upset that the woman didn't believe me. But at least I could tell the girl's family back home that I had seen her and that she was alive.

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For a few months Emile and I stayed at the camp, along with our new friend Michel.

Finally we were able to return to the provinces we came from. All the children from our province were taken in a big truck to the same children's centre. There we bumped into other children from our village, who had also lost their families. Every day social workers from organisations would come and collect children and take them back to their village if their relatives had been found. No one knew whose turn it would be the next day, so we just hoped it would be ours. We were happy to see other children go home, but didn't understand why it took so long for us. Maybe all our relatives had been killed, or they didn't want us back in the village.

Eventually, after five weeks we were told that, although our parents had not been found, there was an aunt and our sisters who were back in the village. We were happy to know that we would soon be back with our sisters, but worried about where our parents and little brother Pascal might be. Also, my aunt was very sick and I didn't know how she would be able to look after us two and my sisters. Before we went to the village, the social workers showed us a photograph of our aunt and asked if we recognised her and wanted to go and stay with her. Of course I said yes, since I wanted to see my sisters again, although I didn't know how my aunt would cope.

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