

World's first 'home grown' African first-aid guidelines

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A new set of evidence-based guidelines that comprehensively address how basic first responders should be trained to manage emergency situations in an African context has been released, published in this week's *PLoS Medicine*. The guidelines, which were developed by a panel of African-based experts and in conjunction with African Red Cross Societies, focus on first aid interventions requiring minimal or no equipment. They can be used by individuals and organisations involved in first aid training programmes in Africa, and an implementation guide is also available to help tailor the training materials to the local context and target group.

As the authors note, in sub-Saharan Africa, where 41% of all deaths and 39% of the morbidity burden can potentially be addressed by emergency care, prompt and adequate care can increase the likelihood of survival and recovery. "Pre-hospital care is a vital initial step," say the authors, but is often unavailable until now.

The full guidelines and implementation guide, part of the African First Aid Materials project (AFAM) are available at <http://www.afam.redcross.be/>

More information: Van de Velde S, De Buck E, Vandekerckhove P, Volmink J (2011) Evidence-Based African First Aid Guidelines and Training Materials. *PLoS Med* 7(7): e1001059.
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