

ONLINE TRAINING

Self-care in Humanitarian Assistance

April 2023

19th of September 2023, 12.00 – 2.00 p.m. UTC
21st of September 2023, 12.00 – 2.00 p.m. UTC
26th of September 2023, 12.00 – 2.00 p.m. UTC
28th of September 2023, 12.00 – 2.00 p.m. UTC

Humanitarian aid workers are at high risk of emotional and physical exhaustion. They work in complex environments with high levels of stress and pressure, facing crisis and unpredicted situations. No less than alleviating suffering and safe lives is at stake.

In 2015, a survey on the mental health of aid workers showed that up to 79% of respondents had experienced mental health issues like PTSD, depression and anxiety with a strongly gendered response. Looking into factors for coping and resilience, “meaningfulness” was identified as a key driver.

Self-care and well being of humanitarian aid workers in the complex contexts they work in is also the responsibility of humanitarian organisations. However, due to the lack of financial resources and time, it can be difficult for organisations and individuals to prioritize self-care actions even though this is highly important for them and the communities they work with. This can make humanitarian aid workers more vulnerable to experience burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma or other caregiving related mental health distress.

The participatory and interactive training will combine brief theoretical inputs, group work, discussions, short videos, and practice of tools for self-care. It will be based on a narrative therapy approach, which views problems as separate from people and assumes people have many skills, competencies, beliefs, values, commitments and abilities that will assist them to reduce the influence of problems in their lives.

Participants will learn about

- common causes and consequences of stress
- basic, cumulative, and chronic stress, including being aware of warning signs within themselves
- their own responses to stress, together with useful behaviors and approaches for decreasing and managing it, as well as building resilience
- first aid resources and strategies to intervene and support themselves or colleagues



Trainers:

Dr. Prathma Raghavan has worked for 15 years as MHPSS expert in several parts of South Asia, i.a. for Médecins du Monde in Afghanistan. In Myanmar, she has reviewed and adapted mental health support activities for the Rohingya community in the context of Northern Rakhine as well as the refugee camp context in Bangladesh. She holds several degrees in General Psychology, Developmental Psychology and a Diploma in Human Rights. Her work is informed by narrative practices, principles of disability justice, neurodiversity and transformative justice.

Julia Scharinger has worked for more than ten years on gender-transformative peacebuilding and psychosocial support for people affected by armed conflict and violence. For example, she has worked with Rohingya refugees and host communities in Bangladesh, supported first responders to the earthquakes in Nepal in 2015 and is currently engaged in working with IDP-women and women activists in the Caucasus. Julia holds a Master Degree in Narrative Therapy and Community Work from Melbourne University and Master Degrees in Political Science and Development Studies from the University of Vienna.

Application:

The number of participants is limited to 20. Participants will be selected based on gender balance and organisational background, with preference given to Austrian humanitarian member organisations of Global responsibility.

Please use the [link](https://forms.office.com/e/PmxEC6gt6m) to apply by August 24, 2023: <https://forms.office.com/e/PmxEC6gt6m>

You will be informed about your application status by September 1st, 2023 at the latest.

The training is free of charge for participants. However, please note that selected candidates who do not attend at least 80% of the course time will be charged EUR 100,-

The umbrella organisation GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY – Austrian Platform for development and humanitarian aid represents the interests of 33 member organisations, active in the fields of development cooperation and humanitarian aid. In the framework of the programme to improve the quality of Austria's humanitarian assistance, Global responsibility proposes its member organizations and their partners a variety of capacity development activities, including on-site trainings, short online formats and peer-learning workshops.

The programme receives funding from the Austrian Development Cooperation through the Austrian development Agency (ADA).