

Terms of Reference

Training on Systems Thinking in Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid

April 2024

1. Introduction and background

The umbrella organisation GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY – Austrian Platform for development and humanitarian aid represents the interests of 36 member organisations, active in the fields of development cooperation and humanitarian aid. Global responsibility proposes its member organizations a variety of capacity development activities, including on-site trainings, short online formats and peer-learning workshops.

2. Purpose

International development processes are complex, inter-related, non-linear, and constantly changing. They involve many different types of actors, all with different levels of power. Systems Thinking methods try to mirror these qualities, and move away from more conventional project design and implementation that use simple linear input-output-impact project logic. Systems Thinking helps us to understand and deal with the root causes of the issues at hand and break the constant cycle of reacting to immediate crises in fragmented ways.

This training will show participants how to adopt a systems mindset and put it into practice.

3. Objectives of the training / learning outcomes

The primary objective of this training is to equip participants with the skills, knowledge, and tools required to apply a systems mindset in their thinking, working practices and decision-making. Participants will learn how to approach upcoming challenges systematically, take multiple perspectives and develop impactful solutions.

On completion of the training, participants

- are familiar with the core concepts and principles of Systems Thinking
- are aware of the role of power dynamics in systems
- have learned about a diverse set of Systems Thinking tools and methods, including Systems Mapping, and have tried out several of them
- have looked specifically at the challenges of localisation and/or climate change adaptation from a Systems Thinking perspective
- have reflected on how to overcome institutional barriers to Systems Thinking
- know where to find additional resources and tools on Systems Thinking



4. Methodology & target groups

The facilitator(s) will provide a state-of-the-art adult education training for up to 25 participants from member organisations of Global Responsibility, working in development and humanitarian aid.

The training will center on experiential learning, notably practical exercises. A package with useful online materials (readings and videos) will be provided.

All training content must be conflict-sensitive and gender-responsive.

5. Timeframe, location

The training takes place between October and mid-December 2024, either on-site in Vienna (one full day) or online (split into 2 or 3 sessions on separate days).

6. Tasks/Deliverables/Expected output

- preparation call with the programme manager
- facilitation of interactive and participatory training
- submission of report with key points of the training outcome
- debriefing with the programme manager

7. Qualification/Required expertise/Profile

Trainer (teams) must have

- 2+ years of international work experience in the field of humanitarian assistance and/or development work
- demonstrated theoretical and practical expertise in the fields of systems thinking and/or innovation management and/or knowledge management
- demonstrated ability to work in a conflict sensitive and gender responsive way
- training experience
- strong written and spoken command of English as contractual and working language

Please submit your offer including an outline for the proposed content and methodological approach, as well as a financial offer until 03.05.2024 to ilona.reindl@globaleveratnwortung.at.