

Terms of Reference

Self-care in Humanitarian Assistance

February 2023

1. Introduction and background

The umbrella organisation GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY – Austrian Platform for development and humanitarian aid represents currently the interests of 33 member organisations, active in the fields of development cooperation, development education and policy work, as well as humanitarian aid and sustainable global economic, social and ecological development.

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.

2. Purpose

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!

While Organisation must take their duty of care very seriously and offer support, self-care is an important part of the responsibilities of humanitarian aid workers. Due to the lack of financial resources and time, it can be difficult for them to prioritize self-care actions even though this is highly important for them and the communities they work. This makes humanitarian aid workers vulnerable and more prone to experience burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma or other caregiving related mental health issues.

3. Objectives of the training

On completion of the training participants

- can describe common causes and consequences of stress
- can define basic, cumulative, and chronic stress and be aware of warning signs within themselves
- have developed an understanding of their own responses to stress together with useful behaviors and approaches for decreasing and managing it, as well as building resilience
- know practical strategies, resources and exercises to maintain self-care
- know first aid resources and strategies to intervene and support themselves or colleagues



4. Methodology & target group

At least 2 facilitators with different cultural backgrounds will provide an interactive online training comprising 4 sessions à 120 minutes in English language for up to 20 participants who are humanitarian practitioners from member organisations of Global Responsibility and their partner organisations, working in humanitarian aid or in development projects with a HDP Nexus approach.

All training content must be conflict-sensitive, as well as culture and gender-reflective and establish links to relevant Policies/Strategies (e.g. IASC Guidance Note: Addressing Suicide in Humanitarian Settings, 2022).

5. Timeframe, location

October/November 2023, online

6. Tasks/Deliverables/Expected output

- preparation call with the programme manager
- submission of an outline for the proposed content and (if applicable) PowerPoint-presentation 1 week prior to the training
- suggest useful online materials for participantsⁱ
- prepare a one-page briefing paper on good-practice for duty of care for the humanitarian member organisations of Global Responsibility
- facilitation of interactive and participatory online training sessions
- debriefing with the programme manager

7. 7. Qualification/Required expertise/Profile

Trainers teams must have

- 7+ years of international work experience in the field of gender responsive humanitarian assistance, conflict sensitivity and/or development work
- university degree in counselling, psychology, psychotherapy or related subject of study
- demonstrated theoretical and practical expertise in applying psychosocial and/or therapeutic approaches within the context of humanitarian assistance
- demonstrated experience in adapting mental health-approaches to diverse cultural contexts
- training experience, notably experience with online-training tools
- strong written and spoken command of English as contractual and working language

Please submit your offer and a brief interpretation of the tasks until 20/03/2023 to Birgit.Mayerhofer@globaleverantwortung.at.

ⁱ Plan International (2020), Manual for Self-care for Humanitarian Aid and Development Workers, https://plan-international.org/uploads/sites/23/2022/02/self_care-english_manual-web.pdf

CCHN Frontline Negotiators' pressure management resources, <https://frontline-negotiations.org/self-care-resources/>

The Humanitarian Self-Care Podcast, <https://thehumanitarianselfcarepodcast.libsyn.com/>

