

## **Workshop:**

### **Reflecting on "Do no harm" ethical principle in international field work**

This workshop will be conducted in English for 90 minutes. We will need a room with chairs that can be arranged in a circle and PowerPoint.

**Theme of the conference: Prospects, methodology, research innovatory practice in social work education.**

### **Workshop Content**

Globalization requires us to train social workers to work in the international arena. More and more schools of social work address this challenge by including programs for overseas fieldwork. International field placements involve mainly students from the global North visiting countries in the global South. These students may lack knowledge, skills and methods of practice suitable for the host countries. Specifically, during this encounter students are often faced with situations that raise issues related to power relations and paternalism.

"Do no harm" is a primary ethical principle in social work practice. In the international arena, this principle has received attention mainly in the humanitarian aid context. Surprisingly little scholarly attention has been devoted to applying it in short-term international social field work, even though both the visiting students and the local hosts are involved in multiple situations that pose the risk of "doing harm".

Against this background, this workshop is aimed to:

- Identify the challenges faced by visiting students and their accompanying staff, in an attempt to ensure that the "no harm" principle is met while they are training in the host countries.

- Introduce one of the methods we apply to raise awareness of unspoken values and beliefs that underlie and guide social workers in the international arena.

### **Workshop Structure**

The workshop consists of three parts. In the first, the participants will be involved in an interactive experience, which hopefully will encourage them to initiate a professional discussion focusing on International field work. In the second part, we will present four different learning spaces we have developed to ensure that the "do no harm" principle is met. The third part will be dedicated to conclusions and takeaways.

**The first part** of the workshop will be based on the critical reflection process developed by Fook and Gardner. During this process participants will identify the assumptions governing their actions, question them, and develop alternative ways of acting.

The participants will be asked to discuss a critical incident that they have identified as having a harmful impact during an international professional encounter. At first participants will be asked to identify the assumptions and values that drive their actions, feelings, and thinking. They will then be asked to explore alternative behaviors congruent with their values and assumptions and/ or re-examine the worldview and values that guide their behavior to ensure that no harm is done.

**In the second part** of the workshop we will present learning spaces we have developed in order to minimize the probability of harm:

- ❖ An international social work course designed to provide basic knowledge on international social work, including assumptions and principles of professional practice based on the "no harm" principle.

- ❖ A preparatory workshop aimed to develop students' cultural competence. The workshop includes raising awareness and sensitivity to students' diverse identities and power relationships at home and aboard.
- ❖ A daily debriefing seminar conducted by a faculty member abroad, aimed to reflect on harm-related issues in the field practice and plan future interventions.
- ❖ Weekly reports by students on their progress in completing tasks related to promoting harm-free interventions.

**Third part of** the work shop will be dedicated to summary and conclusions.