



WORKING GROUP ON THE ETHICS OF GLOBAL HEALTH AND
VOLUNTEERISM PROGRAMS

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCHOOLS AND UNITS

SECTION 1

Why we should care

Good intentions can lead to poor outcomes

- Undermine health and social systems in host communities
- Strain/drain local resources (time, funds, housing, etc.)
- Teach students & professionals the wrong lessons
 - Objectifying residents; reinforcing stereotypes
- Expose everyone to increased risks [volunteers, patients/families]
 - Substandard health care, etc.
- Compromise our ethics and commitments to do no harm through our involvement in communities.
- Weaken trust in higher education institutions and global north professionals



SECTION 2

Questions for Units to Consider

Homework

- **How confident would you and your colleagues feel** in responding to/advising a student who comes to you to inquire about participating in or selecting an international community-based or service learning program? What **criteria** would you use to help them vet programs?
- **What global community-based experiences** (e.g. volunteer programs, service learning programs, global health programs, other community-based programs, etc.) exist in your school/unit for students? Do students tend to seek experiences through existing university programs?
- Alternatively, how frequently are **students recruited by third party providers** to participate in international community-based programs directly or via **classroom presentations authorized by faculty**?
- What types of **community issues** do students in your school/department tend to engage in through these experiences and what organizations and/or communities are they working with? What voice and authority does the host community have in the design/implementation of the project/experience?
- Under what conditions are students encouraged to consider the **possible positive and negative impacts of their presence** and "service" in the host community? Where and how does this happen? What evidence does your school or unit have that students are learning how to navigate their pre-professional/professional roles in culturally appropriate and ethical ways through these experiences?



Thank you!

We look forward to further discussion in the spring semester!

Stephanie Leslie, sleslie@iupui.edu

Mary Price, price6@iupui.edu



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FULFILLING *the* PROMISE