

# HOPE – HOLISTIC PARTNERSHIP IN SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH CARE EDUCATION

**Coordinator:** Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, Finland

**Partners:** Hue College of Medicine and Pharmacy, Vietnam; Lalitpur Nursing Campus and St Xavier's Social Work College affiliated to Tribhuvan University, Nepal; Central Ostrobothnia University of Applied Sciences and Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences, Finland

**Study areas:** Medical Sciences, Social Sciences

## What are the main aims of your network?

The project enhances the capacity of social work and health professionals in teaching and training institutions in Vietnam, Nepal and Finland. The purpose of the project is to enhance professional growth and multicultural learning of faculty, practitioners and students in partner institutes. The aim is to develop networks where new innovations in teaching and researching health care and social work are possible and can be shared. Innovations will concentrate on poverty reduction by increasing empowerment, making participatory approach and experiential learning possible.

Universities are change makers within the society and they have channels to influence policy makers at all levels of the society. The prevention of poverty in multicultural communities is emphasised by all the institutions involved. This approach is also applied to the cooperation now planned. Important issues in poverty reduction are woman's rights as well as reducing child mortality and combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases.

Our long-term goal is to develop common guidelines in nursing and social work education and practice that could be shared in each country. Principles for future cooperation should be developed on a firm basis of the good experiences that partners have had so far. This should lead to equal cooperation between all partners in sharing knowledge and best practices between Asia and Finland. In addition, global partnership and shared responsibilities will increase understanding between the continents.

One aim of the project is to encourage and develop cooperation between the 2 different Asian countries, Nepal and Vietnam. During the project, partners will share their experience and knowledge in network meetings and on intensive courses. Within 2 years, the partners will get to know each others' institutes, colleagues and curricula.

After the project phase student as well as teacher exchange between the Finnish partners and partner institutions in Asia will continue on a regular basis.



### What kind of activities are there in your network?

Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, the coordinator of the project, has a long-term partnership with all 3 southern partner colleges. North–South–South preparatory funding was granted to Diak on 2007 and a workshop was initiated in Helsinki in September 2007. Helsinki workshop gave a possibility to clarify common needs and set goals. The visit to Helsinki also served the partners in getting to know each other as well as the content of each others' training programmes. The network has received funding for 2008–2010. The first activities will take place in October 2008: a network meeting in Nepal. There we will plan the forthcoming intensive courses. In the planned network meeting in Vietnam in 2009 we will plan the second intensive course and carry out mid-evaluation of the project.

The main activities are student and teacher exchange in the fields of Nursing and Social Work. The network will also organize intensive courses: one in Nepal in 2009 discussing social work and another in Vietnam in 2010 concentrating on health care.

### What sort of successes and challenges have you encountered during your project?

The planning process of the project has been carried out together with the partners by using participatory methods. This has proven useful, as the commitment of the partners seems to be very firm.

### Your advice to forthcoming networks

Prepare to invest a lot of time in explaining and discussing all the matters related to the project, also financial and administrative issues.

