



Partners in weltwärts – Newsletter for partners on the weltwärts programme

Dear weltwärts partners,

We want to make the weltwärts programme as colourful as possible and include people with different backgrounds, skills and areas of knowledge. Find out how you can support this diversity here.

With the help of strong partnerships, we are currently in the midst of many exciting events: As many as four partner conferences are taking place later this year; new ideas for advancing the weltwärts programme have been gathered, some of which are currently being implemented; and there is some good news. So be curious and let us inspire you. In addition, we welcome your feedback on this newsletter.

Happy reading! Bonne lecture ! ¡Disfruten de la lectura! Viel Spaß bei der Lektüre!

With warm regards

On behalf of the weltwärts joint operation

Natalie Tawamba Tessa, contact person for partner communication at the weltwärts coordination centre and

Lourens de Jong, PSC civil society representative responsible for the partner newsletter

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We need you!

After the first three issues of the weltwärts partner newsletter, we need your opinion! Give us five minutes of your time and provide us with your feedback on this newsletter so we can better tailor it to your needs. Thank you very much!

 **Click here to access the survey**

Good news in the volunteer service

The numbers of weltwärts assignments and acceptances are on the rise again. Around 2,300 German volunteers are expected to go abroad in the current year. Originally, 3,234 assignments had been approved by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

However, many implementing organisations have requested a reduction in the number of volunteers.

In the South-North component, the originally planned 845 acceptances rose to 871 volunteers from the Global South.

Good planning and monitoring of funds is essential to ensure that the budget is used as well as possible. Only if funds that are not needed are returned on time can they be used for other programme lines.

And there is one more piece of good news: In the South-North component, the maximum funding rate was increased from 880 Euros to 1,126 Euros per volunteer month.

The increase had been requested by shared-interest groups since the maximum rate had not been raised since the introduction of the South-North component in 2013 and the costs for the volunteers' accommodation included in it were not appropriate. The new maximum rate now takes into account the costs of volunteer accommodation as well as the increase in the cost of living in Germany and can be applied for from 2023-2024.

Further details, including on inclusion, environmental sustainability and engagement of former South-North volunteers, can be found in the short-form minutes of the Programme Steering Committee. It can be obtained by partner organisations in English, French or Spanish through their German partners.

United by the mountain



We talked to Martin Schatke, co-founder of the Andean “Unidos por la montaña” network and staff member of the Colombian organisation Fundación 180.

When and why was the network founded?

The idea of a joint network emerged in 2016 at the Andean partner conference in Bolivia. The network was then founded in 2018 at the weltwärts partner conference in Colombia. The name “Unidos por la montaña” means “United by the mountain (the Andes)”. Representatives of various organisations from Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Peru are thus pursuing the common goal of organising a South-South volunteer exchange in the Andean region. The network is meant to serve as an continuous motor to build structures that make this goal a reality.

How does your network work? What range of offers or activities does it provide?

During the pandemic, there were several digital meetings of the network, in which various topics of the participants were prepared and discussed. Examples are emotional support as well as the safety of weltwärts volunteers. The challenges of a development-related volunteer programme and the role of the Sustainable Development Goals are also important subjects. Another challenging task is the risk of brain drain from the South-North programme, which means that the partners are working out ways for former South-North volunteers to get involved in their home countries instead of staying in Germany after their service.

Through these meetings, participants were able to get to know one another, provide support and receive further training.

When volunteers travel during their service in the Andean region, the organisations can also offer them local knowledge, logistical support and assistance in case of an emergency with the help of the network.

What would you like to achieve with the network over the next two years?

We would like to continue to work on the quality development of weltwärts, offer internal in-depth training courses and raise awareness about the importance of volunteering. We would also like to promote networking of both current and former volunteers, for example through regional meetings. We would very much like to have conducted a first round of a South-South volunteer exchange in the Andean region. That means, for example, that two Colombians do a volunteer stay in Ecuador and two Bolivians do a volunteer stay in Peru, and we can create more social networking among the four countries.

 **[Click here for the complete interview](#)**

 **[Here's how you get to the partner networks](#)**

Paying more attention to mental health

According to several studies researched by the Political representation group of volunteers in international volunteering services (PFIF), mental disorders are disproportionately more prevalent among former volunteers than the average population group. They are also the most common cause of problems leading to a premature end to overseas assignments.

The psychological consequences of bad experiences during volunteer service can burden volunteers throughout their volunteer service and beyond. Various authors call for early awareness-raising about possible psychological stress and for practising strategies for coping with violence or stress. However, the volunteer service itself could also overly strain young adults who are in the process of finding their identity. The studies had been conducted in different countries in the context of different volunteer programmes.

PFIF demands that the topic of mental health be given the same priority in the weltwärts programme as physical health. Within the quality associations, there is already support and further training on this topic. The plan is to discuss this topic further in 2023 between the Ministry of Development (BMZ), the weltwärts Coordination Unit, PFIF and the quality associations, probably with the involvement of experts from the German Tropical Medicine Society.

People with disabilities or impairments in volunteer service



Are you considering assigning or accepting volunteers with disabilities or impairments but still have questions about organisation, implementation, funding and education and mentoring? Then bezev, Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit e.V., is the right place for you to go for comprehensive information.

On the DVD "Just Do It Now", advice on assignment and acceptance of volunteers with impairments/disabilities is presented.

The handbook "Let's Play" offers getting-to-know-you games, energisers and other ideas for designing seminars for inclusive groups.

And the handbook "Incredibly Inclusive" reveals a collection of numerous ideas and experiences on how education and mentoring in volunteer service can be made more inclusive and barrier-free.

Help to make the voluntary service more inclusive!

- ➔ **bezev - Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit**
- ➔ **DVD Just Do It Now**
- ➔ **Handbook Let's Play!**
- ➔ **Handbook Incredibly Inclusive**

Former volunteers help shape weltwärts politically



We spoke with Edmérçio Ricardo about the PFIF volunteer representation. Edmérçio completed his volunteer service at Welthaus Bielefeld in 2017-18 as a South-North volunteer and has been working since then in health care and care

for the elderly in Germany. He has been working in the Political representation group of volunteers in international volunteering services (PFIF) since the start of 2022 and was elected to the Programme Steering Committee (PSC).

When and why was the representation group of volunteers founded?

PFIF was founded in 2014. The aim of the representation group is to include the views of former volunteers at the policy programme level in the PSC.

The implementing association of PFIF, grenzenlos - Vereinigung internationaler Freiwilliger e.V., was founded in 1999. It advocates for former international volunteers across implementing organisations and programmes. Grenzenlos also organises the "And now" ("Und jetzt") Conference. All former volunteers can exchange ideas about further commitment after returning from their volunteer service there.

How do you recruit new members for the representation group of volunteers?

All former volunteers are always welcome to join us. We advertise PFIF through our Instagram channel and Facebook. And of course, we would like to recruit new members at the seminars for returning volunteers.

We would also like to have more former South-North volunteers – but we realise this is very difficult.

What was your personal highlight at PFIF?

When I did my service as a South-North volunteer in Germany, I wasn't really familiar with the structures of the weltwärts programme. Through my involvement with PFIF, I now understand them far better. I think it's great that the weltwärts joint operation involves all stakeholders and makes democratic decisions about the programme.

I also think our new digital network for former volunteers is great. The ww-N is open to all former volunteers, but they have to register here first. There the PFIF work groups are introduced, online meetings are arranged, the programme is described, and news is reported.

- ➔ **Click here for the full interview**
- ➔ **Click here after a registration to get to the ww-Network**
- ➔ **Click here for more information on PFIF**
- ➔ **PFIF is also on Instagram**
- ➔ **PFIF is also on Facebook**

Do you have any questions or

suggestions?



The Programme Steering Committee (PSC) has a contact person for partner organisations. Partner networks as well as partner organisations can contact Lourens de Jong from the Ventao quality association directly if they have suggestions regarding the agenda of the PSC. Before each meeting, the preliminary agenda is sent to the partner organisations via the German implementing organisations. The short-form minutes of the meeting are sent in four languages to the German implementing organisations, which then forward them to their partner organisations.

Contact: Mr. Lourens de Jong

➔ lourens.de.jong@ventao.org

Dates

- **Next Programme Steering Committee meeting:** 8 December 2022.
- **Partner conference in Colombia**, Villa de Leyva, 18-23 September 2022, organised by DRK Volunta in Hessen in cooperation with Fundación 180 Ramos de Buitrago and Hostelling International Bolivia.
- **Partner conference in Bosnia**, Sarajevo, 3-7 October 2022, organised by Initiative Christians for Europe with Nadbiskupijski centar za pastoral mladih “Ivan Pavao II”
- **Partner conference in the Philippines**, Cebu City, 14-18 November 2022, organised by Karl Kübel Stiftung für Kind und Familie in cooperation with International Youth Community Services (ijgd), Arbeitsgemeinschaft Pfingstlich Charismatischer Missionen, Global Initiative for Exchange & Development, Vision Help International Care Foundation, Don Bosco, Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation, Bidlisiw Foundation, Quidan Kaisahan.

- **Partner conference in Germany**, Berlin, 21-25 November 2022, organised by Association of Young Volunteers in cooperation with Khmer for Khmer Organisation.
- **Partner conference in Rwanda**, Kigali, May/June 2023, organised by DRK Volunta in Hessen in cooperation with Partnerschaftsverein Rheinland-Pfalz/Rwanda.

Follow us on ...



Contact

ENGAGEMENT GLOBAL gGmbH

Service für Entwicklungsinitiativen - Service for Development Initiatives

weltwärts Coordination Unit

Tel. +49 228 20 717-2232

Redaktion.weltwaerts@engagement-global.de

To the weltwärts website

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ENGAGEMENT GLOBAL gGmbH

Service für Entwicklungsinitiativen - Service for Development Initiatives

Tel. +49 228 20 717-0

info@engagement-global.de

To the Engagement Global website

The headquarters of the organisation are located in Bonn

Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 40, 53113 Bonn

Managers authorised to represent the organisation: Dr. Jens Kreuter, Ingrid Arenz

Commercial register: Bonn Local Court: HRB 19021

VAT ID: DE280482195

Responsible for content weltwärts joint operation, represented by Astrid Neumann (weltwärts Coordination Unit) and Lourens de Jong (ventao)

Editorial team Natalie Tawamba Tessa (weltwärts Coordination Unit) and Lourens de Jong (ventao)

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