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Partners in weltwärts –
Newsletter for partners on the weltwärts programme

Dear weltwärts partners,

In our last newsletter, we announced that weltwärts is in an anniversary party mood this year. After all, weltwärts has been around for 15 years now, whilst the South-North component has been with us for a decade! Events will be taking place throughout the year – some live and some online – and all with the aim of celebrating and raising awareness of weltwärts. You can read all about where and how these events are taking place in this newsletter. So, get your party hats on and join the fun!

In this newsletter, we will also reveal the results of our volunteer survey and, of course, bring you some more news from the programme management.

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

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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Well done, everyone!

It is all thanks to you that weltwärts can even exist at all. Your tireless commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, your readiness to cooperate and your response in the face of crises are immensely important to the programme. 50,000 young people have already taken part in initiatives across 90 countries. Together, we have strengthened partnerships, shared perspectives and broadened horizons. For this, we can all give ourselves a pat on the back. Well done, everyone – we are very proud of our network!

Send us your weltwärts anniversary photos!

We would like to ask you to send us a photo of yourself or your organisation which sums up the idea of weltwärts and partnership. You are also welcome to submit a caption or a couple of sentences explaining what you find special about weltwärts or your hopes for the programme in this anniversary year. We will use your photos and messages to create a weltwärts collage which we will then share with all our stakeholders. Let’s put a face to the programme!

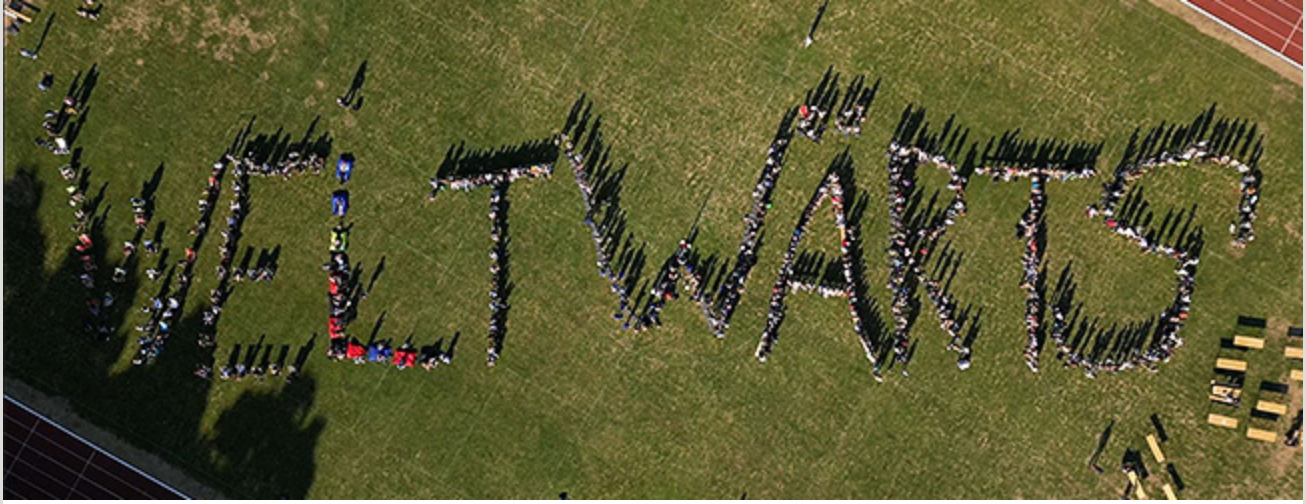
Redaktion.weltwaerts@engagement-global.de

to the collage of weltwärts anniversary photos

International partner conference in Berlin

Like last year, there will be a partner conference taking place in Germany in mid-October, and all weltwärts partners have been invited. The conference is already fully booked, but we will be sure to include a report in our next newsletter. We are arranging a special celebratory reception at the event to mark the weltwärts anniversary. Ambassadors from some of the countries where weltwärts is active have been invited to join us. We’re looking forward a lively discussion about the programme!

How the volunteers celebrated in Germany



The large weltwärts festival in Göttingen (Germany) saw over 1,300 current and former volunteers come together over the course of four days to celebrate weltwärts' 15th birthday. Dancing, singing, reunions, discussions about development policy related topics, new ideas for getting people involved, sporting competitions, honouring the 4,000th South-North volunteer – the festival delivered, and then some. You can get an idea of how it all looked here:

Info about the festival

to the weltwärts festival website (in German)

Drumming for 15 years of weltwärts

At the end of March, some 160 representatives of the German weltwärts organisations came together with employees of the weltwärts Coordination Unit and the Federal Ministry for Development (BMZ) at the open weltwärts stakeholder conference to exchange

ideas, develop their skills in workshops and celebrate the anniversary year. The BMZ thanked all those who took part for their team spirit and their cooperation over the last 15 years.
When instruments were suddenly handed out and over a hundred people began to make music together, there was a real sense of togetherness. You can get an idea of how it all looked and sounded here:

weltwärts celebrates 15 years of international volunteer service

to the drum video on Youtube

Long awaited and a great success: the partner conference in Rwanda

It has finally happened: in May, the partner conference for East African countries finally took place in Kigali, Rwanda. 52 participants from Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Germany made the most of the friendly atmosphere to clear up any questions they had about the programme and discuss practical issues such as arranging visas, preparing and mentoring the volunteers and rising costs. Visits to the places of assignment in Kigali made it possible to put a variety of questions to the officials and volunteers. And discussions were not just limited to weltwärts-related matters: a visit to the Kigali Genocide Memorial, which honours the Tutsi victims of the 1994 genocide through moving words and images, left a lasting impression.

Get an insight into the experience here.

News from the programme management

The budgetary situation in Germany remains strained. A forecast for the 2024 federal budget is not yet available; for this reason, no financial statements regarding weltwärts from 2024 onwards have been prepared. What is clear is that the BMZ (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development) regards weltwärts highly and, to date, the programme has not experienced funding cuts. Due to strong political interest in Germany, there are even plans to expand the South-North component further – but this can only happen with increased funding. The German weltwärts organisations have spent the last few months mobilising former volunteers and other partners to show support for maintaining/improving the funding that international volunteer services receive. They are also contacting members of the Bundestag (Federal Parliament) for help.

weltwärts has its own country-specific contact persons for visa and security matters (LAVIS) in 15 countries. LAVIS collect information about visas and security in their countries, which they then provide to the weltwärts organisations. They also maintain contact with the German foreign missions and migration authorities. All LAVIS took part in a four-day conference together with the quality associations and weltwärts Coordination Unit to share their experiences, career journeys and personal development stories from the weltwärts programme and to learn from one another. The LAVIS in Colombia will end its services from 1 January 2024 due to the stable situation in the country. Advice is currently being taken as to whether to establish a LAVIS in Namibia. LAVIS typically receive funding for at least three years.

As ever, your German implementing organisation will be able to provide you with further details on what came about from the Programme Steering Committee meeting that took place in June 2023.

Survey: involvement extends beyond the volunteer service

Some 89% of former North-South volunteers are satisfied with their weltwärts volunteer service. A large portion of them have also expressed an interest in working in the fields of social justice and development cooperation. The education and mentoring before, during and after the volunteer service was also praised.

And, even better, almost all former volunteers in the South-North component were happy with their service (97%). Here, too, the majority of volunteers would like to continue their involvement with social issues and campaigning for justice, both in their private and professional endeavours. Unfortunately, some of the volunteers faced discrimination or racism during their time in Germany. They did, however, feel supported by their places of assignment and mentors.

The comprehensive, official report on the volunteer survey is expected to be published on our website in September. So make sure to check back here regularly:

www.weltwaerts.de/en

Dates

- **Partner conference in Berlin, Germany, 16th to 20th October 2023**, hosted by Deutsch-Indische Zusammenarbeit (German-Indian Cooperation) together with the Dream School Foundation (India)
- **Partner conference in Ghana, 29th January to 2nd February 2024**, hosted by Eine-Welt Netz NRW (One World Network North Rhine Westphalia) together with the Royal Beam Preparatory School and the Anidaso Woho Ghana Foundation
- **Partner conference in Argentina, planned for February 2024**, hosted by the Rottenburg-Stuttgart Association of Catholic German Youth and its partner organisations.

Follow us on ...

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