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weltwärts

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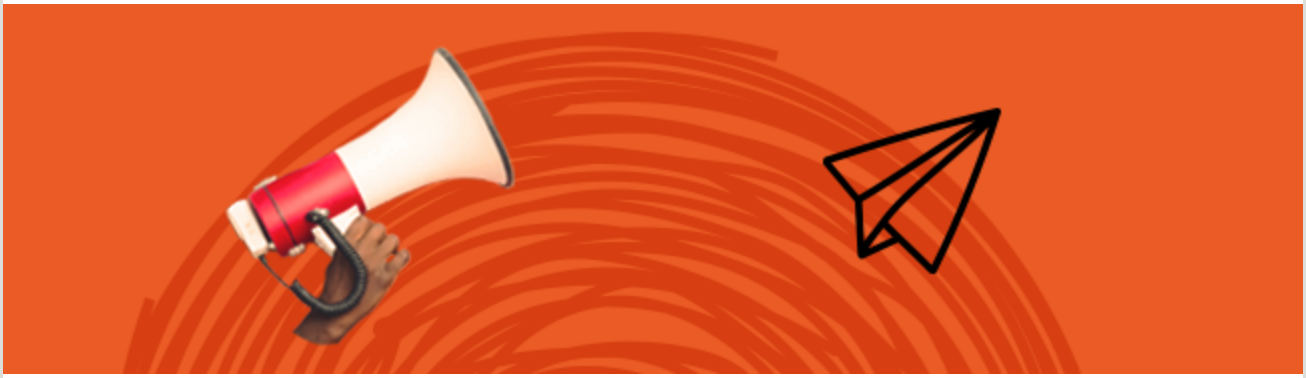

Partners in weltwärts – Newsletter for partners on the weltwärts programme

Dear partners,

weltwärts stands for new perspectives, strong networks, development goals (SDGs) and human rights within the One World. The weltwärts development volunteer service embodies these ideals on multiple levels, in its programme management, at partner conferences and in various projects.
Be inspired and find out more about the wide range of weltwärts assignment opportunities available.
Happy reading! Bonne lecture ! Viel Spaß bei der Lektüre! ¡Disfruten de la lectura!

With warm regards
On behalf of the weltwärts joint operation

Ursel Biester, 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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Accompanying measures for engagement funding of former South-North volunteers in the Global South

"Connect and Act“ – a meeting of former volunteers in Morogoro, Tanzania. Copyright: Anna Mehlhorn

Since mid-2024, it has also been possible to fund projects by and for former South-North volunteers which support their development-related engagement after their return to their home country. The request must be made in conjunction with the German partner organisation.
Since we became aware of this funding opportunity in June 2024, we have been able to approve two requests: The Evangelisch-Lutherisches Missionswerk Leipzig e.V. ran a three-day seminar in Tanzania, to which nearly 20 former South-North volunteers from the last ten years were invited. On a project of Ecoselva e.V. 17 former South-North volunteers from Peru joined forces to set up a hiking group and to establish a form of sustainable tourism in the Peruvian regions Pasco and Huanuco.
You are also welcome to submit a request in conjunction with your German partner organisation! You can find more detailed information about submitting a request on our website:

Developing measures to accompany the programme

Click here for a more detailed report:

Accompanying measures for engagement funding of former South-North volunteers in the Global South

Complete volunteer survey reports now online

Every year, we asked returned volunteers to share their experiences of the year in weltwärts. This allows us to determine whether the programme is meeting requirements and where we can make improvements.
The results of the most recent survey are now online. The survey was sent to all volunteers who travelled out in 2023. This year's survey shows encouragingly high overall satisfaction with the volunteer service at 92%. 81% of those surveyed in the North-South component were satisfied or very satisfied with the education and mentoring, and this figure was 87% in the South-North component. As in previous years, the results indicate weltwärts' invaluable benefit for the development of young volunteers. Accordingly, 98% of North-South volunteers and 96% of South-North volunteers report that their awareness of global inequalities has been enhanced by weltwärts. Volunteers' understanding of global interrelations benefited by almost as much.
The overall report was sent to every German implementing organisation. If there are more than five responses by volunteers from a given organisation, that organisation also receives a report containing their own figures so they can compare their result with the average.

To find out more details, click here for the results:

→ 2023 survey: weltwärts programme once again rated positively by volunteers

New from programme management (meeting of 28/11/2024)

Compared with previous years, there is a slight downwards trend in volunteer numbers. This primarily affects the North-South component, but numbers are slightly down in the South-North component as well. The timely issuing of visas is often a hurdle in this regard.
Since early 2024, measures have been taken to counteract the downwards trend in the North-South component. For example, one work group is busy developing a modern external image for the programme, making it more appealing to young people in Germany. The work group “diversity/wider target groups” is focusing on diversity in the programme’s target group. It is working on engaging with the various groups of people who are currently under-represented among weltwärts volunteers, such as people with vocational education, people under 23, men and persons identifying as male. How can we reach them with information about the programme? And: What makes weltwärts attractive to different groups of people? The “service formats” work group is discussing the idea of improving the conditions for shorter service durations (between six and twelve months) as demand for shorter service formats has increased. A proposal is being developed for a pilot project in the North-South component. The PSC will decide on this in their next meeting.
To maintain variety and to offer a wide range of places of assignment in the future as well, the BMZ and the weltwärts co-ordination unit have begun an initiative to acquire new implementing organisations. The goal is to counter the fall in the number of applicants and embarkations as well as the decline in sending organisations.
For the first time, the monitoring and evaluation report has considered the impact of “partnerships”. This part of the report is based on the results of workshop surveys at partner conferences. This survey concerns the collaboration between the German organisations and the international partners in order to measure the importance of international partnerships for the weltwärts programme. Based these

initial findings, further modifications need to be made to the questions and methodology.

More information about the current issues the Programme Steering Committee is addressing can be obtained from your German implementing organisation. Summary minutes in English, French, Spanish and German will be sent in the spring, together with the agenda of the next Programme Steering Committee meeting (15/05/2025).

Partner conference in India

Copyright: Karen Pinto

Nagpur, in the heart of India, hosted the partner conference for the Asian region between 30th September and 4th October. Over 60 participants from more than 40 weltwärts organisations in Nepal, Sri Lanka, India and Germany came together to exchange ideas and experiences. A key topic was the ongoing problems acquiring visas for volunteers wanting to travel to India. There was also an growing number of complaints regarding the increased effort required to support young volunteers and the lack of commitment.
We spoke to Jona Aravind Dohrmann (CEO and Chairman of the German-Indian Cooperation organisation, DIZ) and Maitreyee Kumar (founder of the education NRO Dream School Foundation, DSF), who organised the conference.

Click here for the interview

→ Interview with the organisers of the partner conference in Nagpur, India, 2024

Coming together in Cologne

At the end of January, the 14th open weltwärts stakeholder conference took place in Cologne, hosting around 90 representatives of German civil society, the weltwärts coordination unit (30 people) and the BMZ (3 people). The main goal was the exchange of thoughts and ideas between the various stakeholders in workshops and discussion groups. The challenges surrounding volunteer work were discussed in a constructive manner.

Click here for a more detailed report:

→ The power of the collective: 14th open stakeholder conference in Cologne

Dates:

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- Next Programme Steering Committee meeting: 15/05/2025 Partner organisations from the Global South can add topics of their own to the agenda. To do this, at least ten organisations must jointly contact Lourens de Jong at lourens.de.jong@ventao.org.
- Partner conference in Cape Town, South Africa, 17th–21st March 2025, hosted by the German Red Cross in Hessen Volunta and Play Handball South Africa.
- Partner conference in Ecuador, 13–17th October 2025, hosted by Open Door International and Fundacion Intercambio Internacional Para El Desarrollo (FIIDES). This conference was originally planned for May but had to be postponed until October.
- Partner conference in Frankfurt, Germany, Autumn 2026, hosted by German/Indian Cooperation with Democracy International.
- Partner conference in Oaxaca, Mexico, 09–13th February 2026, hosted by BDKJ Rottenburg-Stuttgart with Arquidiócesis de Antequera – Oaxaca.
- We would welcome another partner conference in South-East Asia and have sent out a call for declarations of interest to implementing organisations active in the region.

Christmas wishes

It is important to strengthen contacts with visa-issuing authorities and boost the programme’s image. To this end, Christmas greetings were sent to all German embassies overseas and all foreign embassies in Germany with a connection to weltwärts. The embassies received a single sheet of information and a link to the slide show.

A new face of partner cooperation

The 15th of November marked a change in staffing at the weltwärts coordination unit: Ursel Biester is now responsible for partner involvement.
Ursel: I was a volunteer myself in Brazil in 2003 and I am now delighted to support the networking of partner organisations in the weltwärts organisation and to come into contact with them. My hope is that the good relationships between the German implementing organisations and their partner organisations in the Global South will

continue and that the voice of partner organisations in the weltwärts joint operation will become stronger overall. I am looking forward to working together and I am always open to requests, ideas and feedback!

Follow us on ...

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