



# Partner Perspective in Focus



Deutsch-Indische  
Zusammenarbeit e. V.



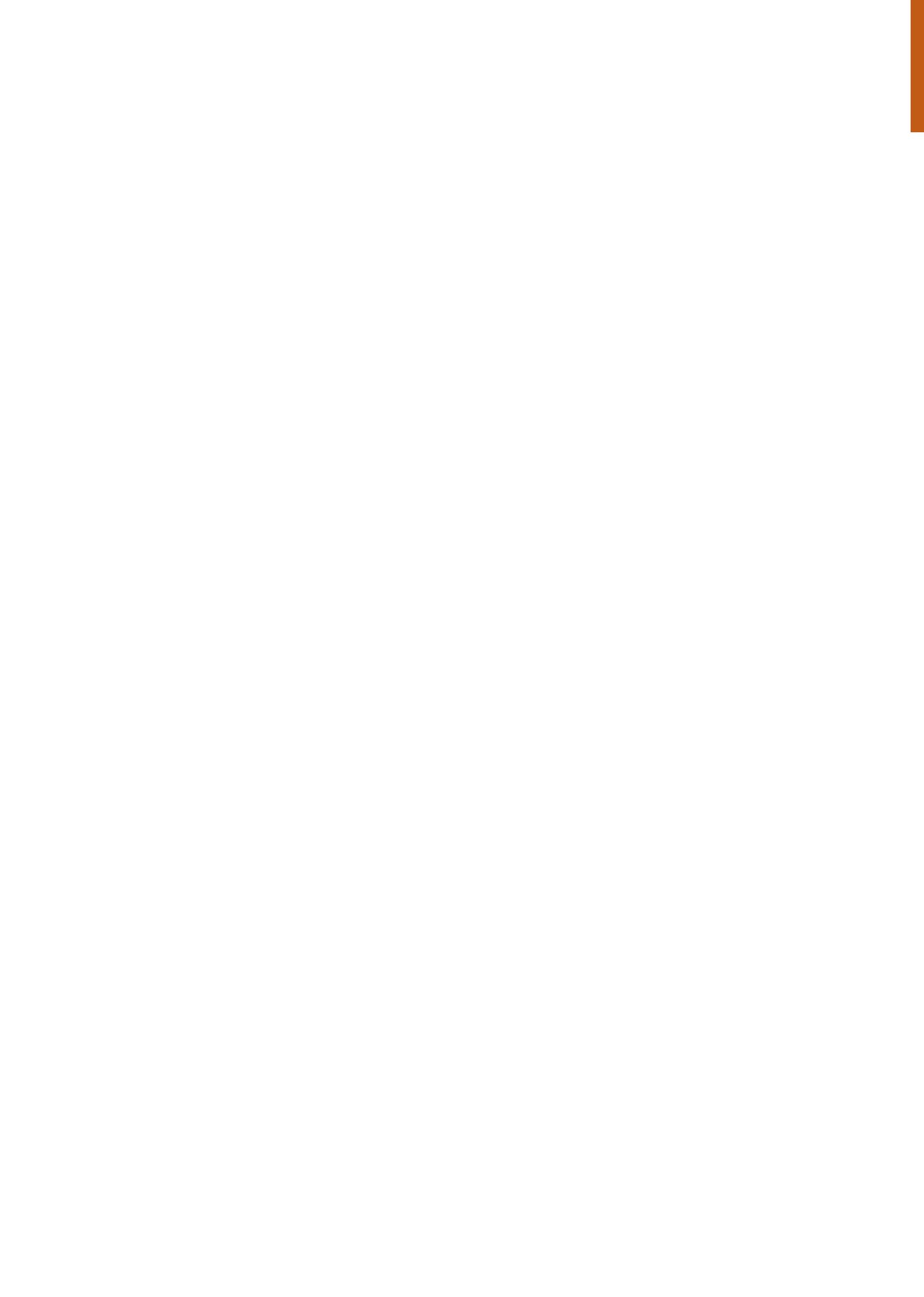
*Ecumenical  
Sangam, Nagpur*

Mit finanzieller Unterstützung des

**BMZ**



Bundesministerium für  
wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit  
und Entwicklung



# Partner Perspective in Focus

© Deutsch-Indische Zusammenarbeit e. V.  
Odrellstraße 43  
60486 Frankfurt am Main / GERMANY  
e-mail: [info@diz-ev.de](mailto:info@diz-ev.de)  
Website: [www.diz-ev.de](http://www.diz-ev.de)  
Phone: +49 (69) 7940 3920



Deutsch-Indische  
Zusammenarbeit e. V.

Printed with the financial support of the BMZ. The editor is solely responsible for the contents of this publication.



Graphic Design: Stefan Berndt, fototypo



# Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Part 1: Introduction and Background  | 6  |
| 1. Welcome Address of the Programme Steering Committee                                 | 7  |
| 2. Introduction by the Convenor of the weltwärts Partner Conference 2014 for India     | 8  |
| 3. Introduction by the CFO of the Ecumenical Sangam (Host of the Partner Conference)   | 11 |
| 4. Introduction by the Co-Moderator of the weltwärts Partner Conference 2014 for India | 12 |
| 5. Final Programme of the weltwärts Partner Conference 2014 for India                  | 13 |
| 6. Fact Sheet regarding the weltwärts Partner Conference 2014 for India                | 17 |
| Part 2: Results regarding the subjects introduced by the Programme Steering Committee  | 19 |
| I. Participants' Feedback regarding the following subjects:                            | 20 |
| 1. News from the weltwärts programme   |    |
| 2. Partner Dialogue in the Composite Structure weltwärts                               |    |
| 3. The South-North Component   |    |
| 4. Establishment of a programme-wide Quality Management System                         |    |
| II. Results Regarding Cross-Cutting Issues   | 27 |
| III. Miscellaneous Feedback to the PSA   | 31 |

# Part 1

## Introduction and Background

# Welcome address

of the weltwärts programme steering committee

Dear members of partner organisations and attending sending organisations,

We are thrilled to once again be able to hold partner conferences across different continents this year, and in doing so to be able to better involve local partners in the further development of the weltwärts programme. Following on from the productive 2012 conferences, the programme steering committee decided to establish this instrument for partner dialogue, partner networking and partner involvement as a permanent instrument in the weltwärts programme. We thank you for making the journey to participate in one of the 2014 partner conferences and look forward to hearing your experiences of weltwärts and your expectations of the programme.

A lot has happened since the last partner conferences; the ideas and wishes that you formulated back then were important prompts: The South-North Component was introduced; a new cross-programme quality management system was drafted; country contact persons were deployed in eleven countries to deal with questions about visas and security; procedures were developed to improve partner participation. Since 2013, the weltwärts programme has been under a process of further development by the newly created programme steering committee. This committee includes representatives from sending organisations, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Engagement Global – Service for Development Initiatives and former volunteers. Members of the programme steering committee will be taking part in all partner conferences to inform you about the latest developments in the weltwärts programme, to answer your questions and, above all, to report back to the programme steering committee with your comments and suggestions regarding the weltwärts programme.

One suggestion was common to all partner conferences in 2012 – the suggestion for a stronger integration of partners in the further development of the weltwärts programme. As a result, the 2014 partner

conferences in Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, India, Rwanda and South Africa will all have a key focus on the topic of partner involvement. Use the conference to discuss the topics that you come across in your day-to-day work with others. Discuss the new developments in the weltwärts programme and give us your feedback on these. Create networks with other partner organisations in order to initiate new joint projects and to help to shape the future direction of the programme. Your inputs form the basis for our continued work together.

We would like to thank the partner organisations and sending organisations who have organised the conferences for their dedication and commitment which has made the conferences possible. We wish everyone participating a successful conference full of enlightening discussions and productive workshops. We hope that you are able to take lots of ideas for your work in your organisations home with you and to give us suggestions for our continued work in the programme steering committee.

Kind regards,

The members of the weltwärts programme steering committee

# Introduction

by the Convenor of the weltwärts Partner Conference 2014 for India

Dear Friends and Partners in the weltwärts volunteer programme,

Dear Participants of the second weltwärts Partner Conference for India in Nagpur,

It was indeed once again a privilege to host the second Partner Conference of this kind in Nagpur in cooperation with the Centre for Sustainable Development (CFSD) and the Ecumenical Sangam on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) from 3rd to 6th November 2014 in Nagpur.

Six years into the programme, this second round of global weltwärts Partner Conferences aimed at securing the Indian Partners' perspective on and aspirations regarding the volunteer programme. Altogether, the hosts were happy to receive 72 participants including the ones from Germany. We from the DIZ were extremely happy to have the Ecumenical Sangam as the local host and facilitator who created the perfect setting for this conference. Everything was organised minutely and with great care and love which was felt by the participants of the conference as soon as they set their foot into the Rainbow Conference and Guesthouse.

Furthermore, I was grateful to Leena Buddhé from CFSD to co-moderate the conference along with me. She was immensely ingenious in constantly bringing in the Indian perspective and smoothly keeping the conference on track whenever time was running and we all were running the risk of being carried away by undoubtedly interesting discussions.

The 2014/2015 series of weltwärts Partner Conferences focussed especially on strengthening the partner perspective from the countries of the Global South. Besides the Conference in Nagpur, there were similar gatherings in Argentina, Costa Rica, South Africa and Bolivia. Another aim was to promote the dialogue between the composite structure of the

weltwärts programme (understood as the cooperation of the Ministry [BMZ] and the Civil Society as represented in the Programme Steering Committee) and Partner Organisations regarding overarching questions of the programme development. Besides these foci, the participating organisations benefited from an excellent networking platform to enhance regional dialogue, cooperation and exchange of ideas, thoughts and practices. All this ultimately leads to an improvement of the overall quality of the weltwärts volunteering programme.

During the Partner Conference it became very clear, that though the weltwärts programme was "implanted" from outside, the Indian Partners have by all means accepted the programme as their own and would henceforth like to be involved in the shaping of the programme in a stronger manner.

German Sending Organisation involve their Partners in various degrees, some right from the advertising and selection process, where the Indian Partners have a say in the selection of the suitable candidates. But the involvement of the Partners completely lacks when it comes to evaluating the actual performance of the volunteers and the assessment of the deployment. Whereas the returning volunteers are interviewed in an elaborate questionnaire regarding their experiences during the entire volunteering process (preparation, volunteering, post-volunteering seminar), the Partners (as well as the Sending Organisations) have no voice in this process of quality assessment whatsoever.

It was heartening to see, how much the Partners who were indeed very lively and interested in contributing their thoughts utilised the Conference for a professional exchange of experiences and ideas. One could hardly see anybody who was not deeply immersed in a discussion with other colleagues, with Ms Birgit Pickel, the representative for Civil Society Involvement from the BMZ or the two members of the Programme Steering Committee (Jan Wenzel from the Quality Association ventao and Stephan Freericks as the representative of returned volunteers).



Lighting of the Lamp - Ms Birgit Pickel from the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) lights the lamp as a good tradition in invoking blessing for the upcoming event at the beginning of the weltwärts Partner Conference 2014 in Nagpur. Sandhya Wasnik, Slumwork Coordinator (in front) and Vijaya Shah, Programme Coordinator (in the rear), look on.

One of the new Partners from The Hope House immediately took the initiative to create an online group and communication platform in order to keep the networking alive even after the Conference. One can still see a lot of communication happening on this “channel”.

The longer the duration of the Conference the more one felt that everybody was contributing and actively shaping the proceedings of the Conference. This was due to the freedom left to the Convenor and organisers to leave enough free space in between in order to react to wishes from Participants of the Partner Conference.

Not last, but least, the Conference was a wonderful opportunity for the representatives of the Programme Steering Committee to observe with their own eyes what kind of lively programme they are supporting, everyone in their own way in different capacities. They were able to see beyond their desks in Bonn or Berlin what active partnership and cooperation between the stakeholders of the programmes looks like. If not for anything else, we were grateful to them for extracting so much time and coming out the heart of India and watching with their own eyes!

If we from the DIZ were able to contribute in at least a small way towards the composite structure of the weltwärts programme becoming an even stronger joint operation between the German and the Indian stakeholders, we would be very glad and are looking forward to the future networking and integration process. Especially in times like these, when many try to demonise “the other” as a potential threat it cannot be valued high enough if many work towards breaking down walls of ignorance and ostracism.

Wishing all the Partners and Stakeholders good success in their respective endeavours,

Jona Aravind Dohrmann  
(Convenor of the weltwärts Partner Conference 2014 for India)

# Introduction

by the CFO of the Ecumenical Sangam (Host of the Partner Conference)

Dear Friends,

It is indeed an honour and privilege for Ecumenical Sangam, involved in Community development work since 1993 and also a long standing partner of the Deutsch Indische Zusammenarbeit e.V., to once again host the Weltwärts Partner Conference 2014. We take pride in welcoming the Programme Steering Committee, the Moderators, Co-Moderators, eminent speakers, and each and everyone of you to our City of Nagpur, famously known as the Orange City.

We, the Sangam Team, are confident that this conference will provide a unique opportunity for a meaningful interaction amongst the participants, and in understanding and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders. This will help in evolving effective policy guidelines for the benefit of all concerned.

Apart from the fruitful discussions and recommendations suggested by the Partner Organizations and the different opinions of the Sending Organizations and the Weltwärts on the various issues raised, we feel that there will be ample scope for mutual growth and cooperation in undertaking this Programme. The Conference may in turn take up from where the last Partner Conference held in 2012, had signed off, and thus, contribute in the overall improvement of the Weltwärts Volunteer Programme.

We wish this Conference all success.

Karen D'Souza CFO

# Introduction

by the Co-Moderator of the weltwärts Partner Conference 2014 for India

Good Morning everybody!

I am extremely honoured to have the chance to address you all in this prestigious moment when Nagpur hosts the weltwärts Partner Conference in this week. This is a precious moment for us because aside from the fact this program underlines the weltwärts' successful back-to-back seven years in its realm of volunteering work.

The duty, which is conferred upon me here, is to guide everyone through this Partner Conference along with our German Partner, the DIZ.

A warm welcome to all the delegates from the German ministry, the Programme Steering Committee and the delegates from the partner organizations and the sending organizations.

Thank you so much for taking the time out to be a part of this Conference. We are looking forward to share experiences and suggestions to strengthen the volunteering work.

Again, I would like to welcome each and every one who has been instrumental in making this weltwärts program a grand success until now . I look forward for meaningful discussions and a productive Conference. I hope all of you take back ideas to do more good work in your organizations and some very good memories of Nagpur!

Thank you Leena Buddhe

(Centre for Sustainable Development)

# Final Programme

of the weltwärts Partner Conference 2014 for India



Entwicklungszusammenarbeit

Entwicklungspolitische Bildung

Freiwilligendienste

## Creating Common Ground, Monday, 03.11.2014

| Time             | Subject  | Activity  |
|------------------|--|---|
| 10:00-10:20      | <b>Introduction, Basics</b>  | Welcome, Lighting of the Lamp<br>Cultural Programme<br>Conference Rules   |
| 10:20-11:00      |  | Round of Introduction   |
| 11:00-11:30      | <b>Update</b>  | Short Introduction to the weltwärts Programme and update on new Features  |
| 11:30-11:45      | -----TEA BREAK-----  |   |
| 11:45-13:15      | <b>Partners' Perspective</b>   | General Exchange of Ideas and Wishes of Partners regarding the Partner Conference and the weltwärts Programme   |
| 13:15-14:45      | -----LUNCH-----<br><i>(handing out of Partner Profiles to be filled during the break and be given to the Convenor)</i> |   |
| 14:45-15:15      | <b>Quality Management within the weltwärts Programme</b>   | Input on Quality Management and the Volunteer Survey  |
| 15:15-16:00      | <b>Quality Management within the weltwärts Programme</b>   | 2 groups working on each of the following questions:<br>1. What does quality mean to you<br>2. What indicators would you name for quality<br>3. In how far can or are you as organisations involved in Quality Management<br>4. What can be done to achieve high-quality voluntary services |
| 16:00-16:45      |  | Discussion on Quality Enhancement and Feedback from the BMZ and other Stakeholders  |
| 16:45-17:15      | -----TEA BREAK-----  |   |
| 17:15            | <b>Networking</b>  | <b>Inauguration of the „Market Place“</b>   |
| -----DINNER----- |  |   |

**miteinander  
voneinander  
füreinander**

Deutsch-Indische Zusammenarbeit e. V.  
Odrellstraße 43  
60486 Frankfurt am Main  
Tel.: 069 - 7940 3920  
info@diz-ev.de

Spendenkonto:  
Evangelische Bank  
IBAN: DE84 5206 0410 0004 0041 08  
BIC: GENODEF1EK1

### Going westwards, Tuesday, 04.11.2014

| Time        | Subject                                     | Activity   |
|-------------|---|--|
| 10:00-10:15 | Introduction, Basics                        | Recapitulation of the previous day   |
| 10:15-11:00 | South-North Component of ww programme       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update: South-North component</li> <li>2. Carousel discussion on the-North Component</li> </ol>  |
| 11:00-11:30 |   | "hot seat" with experienced persons in the South-North Component   |
| 11:30-11:45 | -----TEA BREAK-----                         |  |
| 11:45-12:00 | Knowledge Exchange and Effective Networking | The weltwärts programme as a Platform for Networking of Civil Society Actors   |
| 12:00-13:00 |   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What does networking mean</li> <li>2. Are you working with other POs regarding the developmental Projects?</li> <li>3. Networking on Common Quality Standards</li> </ol>   |
| 13:00-13:15 |   | Gathering Feedback from Partner Organisations  |
| 13:15-14:30 | -----LUNCH-----                             |  |
| 14:30-15:00 | Involvement after Volunteering              | Returning Volunteer's involvement (promotion/ support)   |
| 15:00-16:45 | Open Space                                  | <p>Open Space: upon consultation with partner organisations during the conference with collection of results</p> <p>Topics: accommodation, costs, harvesting, knowledge, best practice, discussion on quality criteria, government intervention on bilateral lobbying volunteering in India.</p> <p>Presentation on findings</p> |
| 16:45-17:00 | -----Tea Break-----                         |  |
| 20:00       | -----DINNER-----                            |  |

### Volunteer involvement and mentoring, Wednesday, 05.11.2014

| Time         | Subject  | Activity   |
|--------------|--|--|
| 10:00-10:15  | <b>Introduction, Basics</b>                      | Recapitulation of the previous day   |
| 10:15-11:00  | <b>Mentoring</b>                                 | Introduction to Mentoring  |
| 11:00-11:30  |  | Work groups: what are the mentoring practices in your organisations? What are the problems encountered? What works well(best practices)? |
| 11:30-11:45  | -----TEA BREAK-----                              |  |
| 11:45-12:00  | <b>Mentoring</b>                                 | Continuation of the Workshops on Mentoring   |
| 12:00- 12:30 |  | Gathering feedback from partner Organisation on the Topic of Mentoring and presentation to the Audience                                  |
| 12:30-13:15  | <b>Safety and Security in India</b>              | Security and Safety in india - Concept of the Country Contact Persons and current Indian issues and the German Perspectives              |
| 13:14-14:15  | -----LUNCH-----                                  |  |
| 14:15-14.45  |  | Gathering feedback from Partner Organisations  |
| 14:45-15:15  | <b>Integration and Orientation of volunteers</b> | Integration and orientation of Volunteers in their respective Partner Organisations  |
| 15:15-16:30  |  | Gathering Feedback from Partner Organisations  |
| 13:15-14:30  | -----LUNCH-----                                  |  |
| 14.45-15.15  | <b>Integration and Orientation of Volunteers</b> | Integration and Orientation of Volunteers in their respective Partner Organisations  |
|              |  | Role play regarding three situations with volunteers Observation and Discussion through and with the Participants                        |
| 16:30-17:00  | -----Tea Break-----                              |  |
| 20:00        | -----DINNER-----                                 |  |

### Harvesting Results, Thursday, 06.11.2014

| Time                        | Subject  | Activity  |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 10:00-10:20                 | Introduction, Basics   | Recapitulation of the previous day  |
| 10:15-11:00                 | Harvesting results   | Verification of previously collected expectations and whether they have been fulfilled                              |
| 11:00-11:30                 | Open Discussion  | Subjects that were not covered (enough)   |
| 11:30-11:45                 | -----Group Photo and Tea Break-----  |   |
| 11:45-13:15                 | Final Declaration  | Formulating a Final Declaration   |
| 13:15-14:30                 | -----LUNCH-----<br><i>(handing out of Partner Profiles to be filled during the break and be given to the Convenor)</i> |   |
| 14:30-15:15                 | Evaluation   | Wall of Feedback<br>Oral Feedback on the Partner Conference   |
| 15:15-16:00                 | Quality Management within the weltwärts Programme  | 1. Filling of the evaluation Forms, Farewell, Vote of Thanks, Photograph of the participants, Outlook on the future |
| 16:00-16:45                 |  | Discussion on Quality Enhancement and Feedback from the BMZ and other Stakeholders                                  |
| -----Tea and Departure----- |  |   |

# Fact Sheet

regarding the weltwärts Partner Conference 2014 for India

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Venue of the Conference                        | India / Nagpur (Maharashtra)  |
| Organising Sending Organisation                | Deutsch-Indische Zusammenarbeit e. V.   |
| Cooperating Sending Organisation               |   |
| Partner Organisations involved in the Planning | Ecumenical Sangam, Nagpur<br>Centre for Sustainable Development (CFSD)  |
| Date of the Conference                         | 3rd to 6th November 2014  |
| Participants in Total                          | 72  |
| Participants from the following Countries      | 63 Participants from India<br>9 Participants from Germany   |
| Ration Men/Women                               | 36 / 36   |
| Conference Language/s                          | English   |
| Main Topics covered                            | Quality Management in Volunteer Services<br>South-North Component of the weltwärts Volunteer Service<br>Networking<br>Mentoring<br>Safety and Security in India |



# Part 2

Results regarding the subjects introduced by the  
Programme Steering Committee

# I. Participants' Feedback regarding the following subjects:

## 1. *News from the weltwärts programme*

The audience understood that the weltwärts programme was introduced as a joint undertaking and has been restructured over the years. The volunteer programme also contains the South-North-Component. Other new elements of the programme are the introduction of a quality management system to ensure more uniformity as well as avoid discrepancies where treatment of the volunteers is concerned. A country contact person, namely Mr. Robinson Doss, has also been appointed in the framework of the weltwärts programme. Roughly 3,500 volunteers are sent every year to countries all over the world through the programme.

Also various statistics and a variety of current information regarding the weltwärts Programme was shared with the audience. Statistical data on the number of volunteers who took part in the North-South as well the South-North Component since the introduction of the two programmes was presented. The number of organisations involved in conducting both the programmes were mentioned. The audience was also made aware of the various countries that send South-North-Volunteers and of the fact that India sent the second largest number of South-North Volunteers abroad. Not only was enough information regarding the number of volunteers and sending organisations provided but also the fields in which the volunteers actively participated in. The highest being education followed by supporting children and youngsters, working with disadvantaged people. The last of all being human rights, technology and emergency and transitional aid.

The informative presentations of the various stakeholders involved in the weltwärts programme also threw light upon the working of the weltwärts quality system. The three main steps being quality certification which includes external inspection bodies as well as certifications for all the sending organisations, quality assurance which is ensured by various

quality associations and quality work groups and the final step quality development.

All the above was noted with appreciation and no comments were really made since this input was of more or less informative in nature.

## 2. *Partner Dialogue in the Composite Structure weltwärts.*

The members of the Partner Organisations asked a range of questions regarding the composite structure of the weltwärts programme. The questions raised showed that the Partner representatives present had very varying levels of knowledge about the weltwärts programme – from very basic information to experts who knew the weltwärts Guide-line quite well. Apart from general questions there were also specific doubts regarding volunteers and the roles of the participating bodies. The general questions included issues regarding basic comprehension of the concept of weltwärts, purpose and expectations of the programme, strengthening the communication between Partner and Sending Organisations as well as the exchange of best practices and other ideas among each other. The specific questions were related mainly to volunteering and mentoring. The time span of the service, living conditions of volunteers, integration of volunteers, networking between former and current volunteers as well as steps to be taken during emergency situations which lead to drop-outs, were the main issues raised. The participants were also curious about how the volunteers engage themselves after their return as well as how the Partner Organisations could effectively distribute various tasks among the volunteers during their service period. They also showed great interest in understanding the vision of the German youth. The role of the various bodies involved in the programme, like the Sending and the Receiving organisations as well as the mentors and the volunteers were matters of concern for the participants. The discussion also threw up, that

amongst many Partners there still is a necessity to discuss very basic questions such as leave of volunteers and how best to match the service period of volunteers with their time schedule, especially in case of educational institutions (volunteers should not come during the holidays, since there is less or no work then).

They suggested that the presentations should be kept simple and prior knowledge of the weltwärts programme should not be taken as a prerequisite as this could hinder networking with new Partner Organisations. The Partners also showed great interest in exchanging ideas with various Partner Organisations located in various other countries.

Some members present did not seem well aware of the intentions of the weltwärts programme. Neither did they understand the expected outcome. What does weltwärts expect volunteers to have learnt concerning development? The participants also had several doubts regarding the implementation of the programme. They wanted to know what kind of preparation the volunteers receive before their service in India and if there are guidelines one must adhere to to carry out preparatory seminars.

### **3. *The South-North Component***

The Partner Organisations expressed a strong interest in this new component. Issues of preparation of volunteers, visa and ways to engage volunteers upon their return in their home countries were discussed intensely. It became clear that an adequate preparation of South-North volunteers is essential for a successful stay. Concern was expressed – as already in the 2012 Partner Conference – regarding the age limit of the South-North Component as well as about the requirement to contribute 25 percent towards the costs of the deployment of such volunteers to Germany. In the beginning, there was not enough clarity about the procedure how the volunteers for the South-North Component would

be selected and who could be approached to actually effectuate this programme. Furthermore, the participants were informed by the Convenor of the Partner Conference 2014 that his organisation currently had two different experiences in getting visas for the volunteers – one was a smooth sailing with no hassles, in the other case, the proposed South-North volunteer had to appear in the Consulate four times before the visa to go to Germany was eventually granted.

The question was raised whether there would be an equal exchange of volunteers in both components of the weltwärts volunteer programme. The German Civil Society is lobbying for a ratio of 1:1, but since this kind of ratio would also have heavy financial implications on the German taxpayer, it is also understandable that the German Government would be hesitant about enlarging the programme to this extent.

Concerns were raised about the requirement of learning German in order to obtain the visa for Germany. The reply was, that the BMZ tries to influence and/or inform the German Embassies and foreign missions through the German Foreign Ministry in order to relax the requirement for a minimum level of knowledge of the German language. But the political process for the relaxation of requirements may take some time. The Convenor of the Partner Conference then also remarked that whether the rules for learning German would be eased or not, the requirement to learn and understand as much German as possible in order to experience a meaningful volunteer service in Germany would remain since German is the lingua franca in Germany and everything is transacted in German normally.

The members present thought the concept of the South-North volunteering to be a welcome idea. They believed that the South-North volunteers would be very helpful to the Receiving as well as for the Sending Organisation. They stated that a volunteer who has worked with organisations in the

Global South as well as in the Global North would play the role of a connector between organisations which will further help in maintaining the learning process as well as the networking between the various organisations. They were wholly convinced that maintaining a good rapport with the Sending Organisation would help in bringing the North-South and the South-North-Component at par with each other. The participants praised the South-North Component by suggesting that it is also a great way of promoting inland-volunteering.

#### **4. Establishment of a programme-wide Quality Management System**

There was a general agreement amongst the participants that a certain degree of quality should be observed amongst the participants of the weltwärts programme since low quality and mal-performance of some may fall back on everyone and thus malign the name of the programme which, in India, is accepted widely amongst the Partners and regarding which the Partners expressed full ownership.

The partners initially described and defined the term quality and elaborated on the subjective meaning of the term 'quality' in the context of the weltwärts programme. One of the groups of participants defined quality as a standard or degree of achievement as intended, aimed or designed. They stated that the relationship shared between the Partner Organisation and the Sending Organisation is of utmost importance. In addition to that, the motivation of the volunteers is a key factor of success and team work and spirit are the most important skills to bring in. The group also drafted a cycle which threw light upon the various phases of quality assurance: Plan, implementation, Feedback, assessment of feedback, integration of feedback, new plan ...

There was a high interest and substantial experience of Partner Organisations concerning quality issues (e. g. selection and preparation of volunteers, welcome

culture, mentoring, safety and security issues). For the programme, it might be useful to establish exchange on quality management in a systematic manner between Partner Organisations as well as between Partner and German Sending Organisations.

The members of the various Partner Organisations firmly believed that the introduction of minimum quality standards is a must if one has to create a balance amongst various Partners and regions. The discrepancies in the housing conditions of various volunteers was stated as an example. The accommodations in Delhi may not be the same as the one in Nagpur. Such differences can be overcome by strengthening the minimum standards. The participants vehemently expressed the need to bring about a certain degree of uniformity in hosting the volunteers in India. They also additionally specified that effective quality management must also be ensured where the preparatory seminars are concerned so that the volunteers do not have preconceived and cemented notions about India. The Partner Organisations expressed their wish to be well informed about what the volunteers whereabouts during their service period so as to ensure a high standard of security of the volunteers during their stay in India.

Who would take up the responsibility in case volunteers discontinue with the service was also a major concern. Quality also meant to the Partners, that there should be a clear understanding as to who is responsible for the volunteers in which situation. The same question arose regarding issues where things went wrong and the Partners were in danger of being questioned by the authorities. Another significant issue raised on this occasion was regarding the level of participation of the volunteers in rural issues, meaning that according to several Partners many volunteers rather avoid being put up in rural environments where they have no amenities and facilities. In order to ensure a high degree of quality the right volunteers need to be selected for the right posts.

To ensure quality management in the weltwärts programme the Partners also suggested documenting all the good and bad experiences had by the Partner Organisations regarding various volunteers so that all the members can learn from one another. Beyond documentation, they also suggested an exchange of thought on the best practices and various success stories as well as failures on a common platform. They also saw a great need to improve networking among various organisations to give a better structure to the programme in India. They proposed the setting up of an exclusive facebook page for the various organisations participating in the forum, where every partner updates the ongoing on a daily basis. This could also be of great help to the various volunteers involved in the different organisations. They emphasized that a better system of networking would in turn help in assessing the quality of the weltwärts programme as networking would enrich new ideals as well as help carrying out the existing work models of the various Partner Organisations.

According to the members of the various Partner Organisations the weltwärts programme would achieve greater heights if equal focus is laid on returnee involvement. It is often the case that one does not hear from the volunteers after the follow-up seminars. The whole programme is less meaningful without the last step which is returnee involvement. However it is misunderstood by various volunteers that the last step of the weltwärts programme is the follow-up seminar. The aspect of involvement in the Sending Organisation or elsewhere in the developmental field on their return to the country however seems to have been ignored by many volunteers. The responsible stakeholders should thus make sure that the knowledge and contribution of the volunteers is not just restricted to their resumes.

The participants firmly believed that a good quality standard could be maintained by weltwärts by professionalising the roles of various stakeholders and creating a sense of belongingness where their work is concerned. weltwärts has labelled various posts

of various stakeholders but not described how they should go about their duties and how they should fulfil their responsibilities. Thus they suggested the introduction of brief training programmes for the various stakeholders directly involved in weltwärts. These training programmes should involve topics like assignment of tasks to the volunteers, what kind of tasks, what to expect from them etc. Mentors should be guided as to how they should go about the mentoring process, what are the liberties they can take and what are the restrictions they must adhere to. How can one use the personal skills of the volunteers optimally, how can one ensure the level of motivation among the volunteers. Everyone can have their personal methods of executing the above mentioned points. However these methods may not be pedagogic. This could thus lead to resentment among volunteers who have the habit of comparing the ongoing of the various Partner Organisations to which their fellow volunteers are sent. In this regard, it was also pointed out by some participants, that the openness of the weltwärts programme also bears a lot of opportunities to shape the volunteering the way it suits the Partner Organisation best and not everything should be frozen in Guidelines.

One measure of ensuring quality in the weltwärts programme which has been adopted by the responsible stakeholders was highly criticised by the participants: The Volunteer Survey. The participants were convinced that the survey is a good strategy of the assessment of the volunteers feedback about his or her deployment, working conditions, organisation he/she was employed in, his/her colleagues and the various conditions in existing in society. However, in order to assess the 'volunteer service' the input of the organisation which has employed the volunteer must also be seen as integral, else the feedback is only one-sided and in case of any negative comments throws a bad light on the performance and ability of the organisation which may not necessarily be the case. Sometimes the comments turn negative, when certain things are denied to the volunteer or when the volunteer is requested to adhere to the



Code of Conduct in a particular Partner Organisation. Often, the liberty of young volunteers coming to India, especially female ones, is more restricted than they are used to in Germany.

The partners did not demand for a separate survey for themselves, they only requested to shortlist a few aspects which would be relevant for them and upon which a feedback should be taken from the Partner Organisations as well. In this regard, it was also pointed out by representatives of the Sending Organisations present in the Partner Conference, that their opinion is not asked for either in the Survey. The Partners justified their demand by emphasizing on the fact that the volunteer service does not just consist of the volunteer but also other stakeholders who must be equally integrated. Involving the Partners – according to them – would result in a much more balanced picture of the volunteer service.

Another interesting suggestion put forward by one of the work groups was that a member of any one of the Partner Organisations should be invited to Ger-

many and be given the opportunity to participate in the preparatory seminar for weltwärts volunteers. This could be included as an accompanying measure of the weltwärts programme. This could help maintain the standards of the preparatory seminars as the volunteers would have a better idea as to what they must expect when they set their foot in India.

In addition to the above mentioned suggestions the Partners also propounded a phase of a pre-voluntary service in which the volunteer should be briefed about his job profile as well as the orientation of the project and the observation period (time allocated to review the programme with the volunteer and Partner Organisation).

The Partners also made another request in which they expressed that it is not only important for the volunteers to get an insight into the social and working patterns in India but also vice versa. The partners must also be made aware of how structures function differently in Germany. The accompanying measure in which the Partners are invited to Germany



does cater to the need whoever members of various organisations who have not yet been there remain unaware. Thus the weltwärts programme could provide a few introductory seminars or 'orientation workshops' as they called it, about German society and various current affairs. Here it was pointed out, that some of the Sending Organisation already offer such inputs in their Partner Workshops.

The Partner Organisations also expressed their desire to get in touch with other Sending Organisations in Germany as a measure to strengthen networking and also harvest more knowledge about the composite structure and working of the weltwärts programme

In order to increase the level of satisfaction among the volunteers the Partners thought it would be of great importance to fix up monthly appointments between the volunteers and the mentors regardless of whether they have complaints or not.

The participants also agreed on the fact that all stakeholders involved in the weltwärts programme

must share a common vision. It is often the case that the volunteers has a certain notion of what kind of an assignment he/she would be involved in. The partner on the other hand determines various factors which contribute to the ideal work ethics every volunteer must have. It often occurs that the expectations of the volunteers do not match the factors determined by the Partner Organisation. This leads to conflicts. The conflicts can be resolved by the mentor only if he is aware of the mismatch. Thus it is integral to formulate and propagate a common vision and mission of the weltwärts programme.

The members of the Partner Conference also gave miscellaneous feedback regarding the quality assessment. A participant for example suggested the identification of various cross cutting thematic areas of interests of the various Partner Organisations and volunteers to strengthen ties and involve the volunteers in the right Partner Organisations and in suitable projects. The same participant also proposed that the exploration of fundraising opportunities in India and abroad would help weltwärts and its

stakeholders to increase the budget allocated for volunteers and help gain sponsors. An example stated by her for a fundraising opportunity is Corporate Social Responsibility.

Another work-group believed the strengthening of global networking at the micro, meso and macro level would be of great help for the weltwärts programme. This would include mapping of where all the different Sending and Receiving Organisations are based.

The participants also clarified that the quality of the programme can also be assessed personally by the various organisations by means of direct contact between the Partner Organisation and the Sending Organisation which actually is the nucleus of quality creation.

##### **5. *Landesansprechpersonen (LAP) / Country Contact Person***

The idea of having a Country Contact Person was widely welcome. Especially, since safety and security issues have become a current subject amongst all Partners, maybe not so much for concrete incidences, but the fear of it and the wide media coverage in German news.

The Participants found the discussion on the perception of India in the German media very important in order to bring the Indian perception on the topic into perspective. Many were surprised of the degree of negative media coverage in Germany and the image thus created of India. Some agreed with the bad notion regarding their country, but conceded that certain perceptions about India need to be de-constructed and put together in a different way. Both sides exchanged views on how safety for the volunteers can best be achieved.

In addition, in the overall discussion on safety & security it became clear that the role of the country

contact person needs further clarification. The Partners did not appreciate or really understand why the Country Contact Person is not available for them as Partners, although they could probably benefit from his excellent contacts, experiences and his connectivity to various stakeholders of the programme as well as relevant institutions (such as consulates, embassies, Foreigners Registrations offices etc.). Partners expect the person to take on a stronger role in the future, especially in view of the Indian Partner Organisations.

The Country Contact Person of India, also present at the conference, namely Mr. Robinson Doss, finally presented a paper printed in the conference reader on the issue of safety and security in India. The audience made critical suggestions as a response to the presentation. Mr. Doss propounded that everyone could officially send him his/her suggestions which would then be integrated by him in a new paper.

The fact that contributed to the vagueness of the role of the Country Contact Person was his exclusive availability to the Quality Associations and the Sending Organisations but not the Partner Organisations.

The members of the Partner Organisations present thus expressed a strong wish of keeping in contact with the Country Contact Person so that they could also have a minimum amount of influence in the respective consulates, embassies and Foreign Registration Offices in case of delay in administrative matters, like Visas and Certificates of Registration or FCRA's.

Mr. Robinson Doss highlighted that cooperating can work only on state and government level and improvements come very slowly.

Another idea to ensure more benefits from the Country Contact Person was taking his help in the formulation of Partners' directory and exchange of know-how, hands-on applications for approaches on development through bonds among local Partner Organisations.

## II. Results Regarding Cross-Cutting Issues

The members of the various Partner Organisations present at the conference put forward a range of suggestions, doubts and concerns which they wished to direct to the PSA regarding the volunteer programme weltwärts.

The Partners repeatedly expressed their desire to be better informed about the nature of work which should be assigned to the volunteers during their period of service. To be able to understand the variety of tasks they requested for records of the various tasks carried out by volunteers over the past 7 years. On the one hand this pointed to the fact that some Partner Organisations did not really know in depth about the possible nature of the tasks which could be assigned to volunteers, but much more strongly pointed to the fact that often, there was not enough exchange of information between the Partner and the Sending Organisations. It was also pointed out, that often the nature of the tasks regarding a particular post changed over the years. Here the Convenor of the Conference explained for the Sending Organisations that significant changes in the post description need to be shared with the Sending Organisations immediately since the changes need to be further communicated to the Coordination Office of the weltwärts programme, without which the correct descriptions of the posts cannot be advertised in the internet and thus leads to irritation amongst volunteers who apply on account of the information provided.

Creating a network amongst volunteers and between former and current volunteers was also an expectation put forth by a member. The idea was born that – with the help of the Coordination Office weltwärts – a map of weltwärts volunteer posts could be developed which indicates which volunteer posts are in which location. This could enable volunteers deployed to India to visit each other while on vacation and get to know other regions, fields of work etc. This may also trigger the enhancing of the networking amongst the Partner Organisations.

A worried participant expressed her anguish concerning the ever increasing cost of living in India. At times, there is double-digit inflation regarding the basic amenities and food items which has a direct impact on the cost factor while having volunteers. Though, in between, the Rupee lost in value considerably, the latest trend shows that the Indian currency has recovered by more than 30 percent, which reduces the scope of the Sending Organisations to transfer more funds. She thus asked if there was a possibility that the BMZ would agree to increase the budget provided to the Sending Organisation for each volunteer. In this regard it was pointed out, that the monthly budget provided to the Sending Organisations has not been increased since the inception of the programme in 2007/2008.

Some participants voiced the idea that the Indian Government should be involved in the funding of the programme and that the German Government could enter into bi-lateral negotiations regarding this endeavour. Ms Pickel from the BMZ replied that an involvement of the Indian Government would be highly appreciated. So far, there are no plans in this regard, but it would be very helpful if the Indian Partner Organisations would address the Indian Government and/or its agencies.

One person stated a point that seemed to recur throughout the conference. One must abide to certain minimum standards of accommodation and food. The minimum standards are not a tool to improve the living conditions of the volunteers or to make their stay more luxurious than it has been but to avoid any sort of discrepancies, which then lead to friction and complaints. She mentioned some volunteers in some places have cooks to prepare their daily meals whereas other must cook themselves. Some of them lead a lavish life in the provided accommodations whereas other must live more modestly. Her opinion and feedback was seconded by several members present. A solution to this problem, according to the

participants, would be the working out of common minimum standards by the Ministry and the Sending Organisations. These common minimum standards would then be materialised by the Partner Organisations. There were also some voices who said that it would be quite difficult in agreeing to a certain standard of living since the disparities in India and the cost of living are very different from region to region.

Concerns regarding the evaluation process based on the Volunteer Survey were also mentioned again after this subject was introduced through a presentation, which highlighted the procedure of evaluating and showing the individual questions asked to the volunteers. The evaluation must be multidimensional. They suggested that all stakeholders, i. e. the Partner Organisation, the mentor and the volunteer should participate to avoid restricted communication. Not only should the end result of the volunteer service be discussed between the stakeholders but also their expectations from one another at the beginning of the volunteer service.

Once again – as in the Partner Conference 2012 – the Indian Partners strongly put forth their opinion, that the South-North Component should have another age bracket than the North-South Component. In India, youth is considered up to an age of 35 years. Some India candidates might want to participate in the South-North Component after completing their academic education and after their first professional steps. Ms. Pickel from the BMZ answered that this question is a re-occurring issue and that it might be included in the general discussion of the process of the development of the programme.

One person mentioned it should be considered that often single women will not be allowed to go by themselves as much as they would want to. In this case, one should contemplate sending such candidates in pairs

The role of the new element added in the weltwärts programme i. e. the Country Contact Person remained vague. The participants thus articulated their wish to be able to exploit the opportunity to strengthen the cultural bond between stakeholders with the help of the Country Contact Person. However, the information they have received regarding the responsibilities of the Country Contact Person was limited.

The introduction of incentives for the mentors was an idea suggested by one of the members to ensure enough motivation on part of the mentors involved in the weltwärts programme.

Another point brought up regarding the topic of mentoring was the development of mentoring guidelines to which one must adhere in carrying out his/her duties as a mentor. The participants shared that mentoring itself is a learning process, a kind of spiral. The mentor is an ambassador of the organisation. Nevertheless, with many Partners, there is still a lot of misunderstanding and doubts regarding the mentoring process as the Partner Organisations find it difficult to appoint suitable mentors for the volunteers who do not belong to the NGO in any way. Certain organisations which are not in contact with other organisations in their respective states or cities also find the option of cross mentoring unfeasible. They thus suggested that the returnee South-North Volunteers could be employed by the respective Sending Organisations as mentors for the new batches of volunteers.

Mentoring, by some, was also described much rather as a process in which several persons may be involved to ensure an environment in which the volunteers find a fall-back mechanism in times of crises.

A significant aspect that was emphasized by all the participants was regarding the basic attitude one must have as a volunteer. Cases in which

volunteers showed inability to adjust to sudden changes in the schedules and programmes of the POs, the difficulty in engaging young volunteers who lack professional training or failure in sticking to the code of conduct. The members were also under the impression that the volunteers seemed too independent to understand the needs and limitations of the local workers. Thus the participants laid emphasis on the fact that it is important to create common understanding between the Partner Organisations and the volunteers regarding the most important areas of the weltwärts volunteer service. This would thus help the Partner Organisation as well as the volunteers in meeting each other's expectations.

Not only is the clarification of the role of the volunteer during his/her service period important but also their involvement in activities on their return. The Partners were very interested in what the volunteers do after they have returned from their respective services to Germany. The presentation given through Ms Kirsten Sames of the Karl Kübel Foundation gave the participants some ideas on possible activities the volunteers undertake on their return from India. I was generally agreed upon, that a meaningful returnee involvement can be expected if the volunteers have had a fulfilling period as volunteers in India with a proper involvement into their respective Partner Organisations.

Some participants also expressed their anxiety regarding continuous visa rejections. They thus proposed that the Indian Government must be made aware of the weltwärts programme and its significance. Everybody present pondered over how weltwärts could be represented to the Indian Government. Through brainstorming they were convinced that it is possible through dedicated effort made not only by the Partner Organisations but also by the PSA and/or the BMZ/weltwärts Coordination Office. The idea was vented that it

could help if Germany promoted the weltwärts programme towards the Indian Government on a bilateral level using their diplomatic channels. Policymakers must be contacted and be presented with the structure of the programme. The Sending Organisations could explain to the Indian Embassy as well as the Indian Government through a letter of introduction about the weltwärts programme, which can be utilised as an official document by the Partner Organisations and volunteers as an official document in the visa department. One must also be able to connect with the local elected representatives and develop contact to personally known politicians or high administrative posts. Above all, it is significant that the Partner Organisations and the volunteers display their contributions to the Indian Society. Unless and until the Government has evidence based documents regarding the weltwärts programme it could become more difficult to send volunteers (or receive them) in large numbers.

Some new Partners also wished to bring to the notice of the PSA that they are as new to the weltwärts programme as the volunteers themselves and also require special attention from the responsible stakeholders just like the volunteers do. Many of the new Partners treated the volunteers at first as 'guests' thus not giving them the required amount of tasks and not advising them strictly when the volunteers made wrong decisions. It was remarked that the concept of volunteer services – as understood in Germany – is not as old as it is in Europe. There are several organisations that have been Receiving Organisations over the years. On the other hand, there are also plenty of Partner Organisations who have received their first batch of volunteers this year or last year only. They need input as to how volunteer services function, what is their significance, how they should assign tasks, which tasks should be assigned to them and what rights to the volunteers have as short term honorary employees of the organisation. In order

to avoid such ambiguities the responsible authorities must locate to which organisations that receive volunteers is the concept alien to and offer a few orientation seminars and workshops. The seminars need not be regular and prolonged. They can take place just once or twice. This measure would also help in strengthening the relations between the Global South and Global North in that the Partner Organisations develop a sense of ownership to the programme and can independently make decisions.

The partners also were also partly disappointed with the behaviour of the young volunteers who are overcome with a feeling of enthusiasm and adventure when they set foot in a foreign country.

### III. Miscellaneous Feedback to the PSA

The participants present at the Partner Conference put forward various opinions, feedbacks and suggestions regarding the weltwärts Programme.

First and foremost, they were so content with the Partner Conference that they proposed the idea of organising a weltwärts Partner Conference at the global level. They stated that the conference created better relations between the Partner and Sending Organisations and enabled the sharing of knowledge. The conference shed more clarity on the roles and functions of the various stakeholders involved in the weltwärts programme. Beyond the idea of having a Partner Conference on the global level, the Partners very much requested for perpetuating the instrument of having regular Partner Conferences, preferably every year.

However considering various visa issues, the participants were of the opinion that the German Government must influence the Indian Government in order to avoid any sort of hindrances on the governmental level where both the components are concerned. Developing contact with local politicians for the future strengthening of the programme as well as assuring the safety of the North South volunteers was also a measure suggested by the participants present.

The participants also suggested that devising training programmes for the various stakeholders involved in the volunteer service programme would further help in moulding the programme better. To enhance the quality of the programme, the Partner Organisations should also think about developing and introducing quality parameters in order to be part of the weltwärts programme. This could also involve benchmarking or working with common minimum standards – a thought process which has already been started by some Partners.

The idea of involving the Partners in the programme level – for instance in the Programme Steering Committee – did not find so many takers, probably

also, because this body was too abstract for most of the participants. But there is strong wish that the Partners' view should be taken into much stronger consideration through other instruments such as the holding of Partner Conferences, involving the Partners in the Survey regarding a feedback on the volunteering and through more information in the English language for the Partners. Maybe, the question of a stronger involvement into the shaping of the weltwärts programme came too early and should be discussed again during the next Partner Conferences.

They also firmly believed that evaluations made by the volunteers on the Partner Organisations' level as well as that of the mentors must be taken into account even if it includes criticism. However, this process should be strictly anonymous.

A few suggestions were also put forward in order to minimise the problems regarding the selection of a mentor like the introduction of an external mentoring system or the employment of former volunteers as mentors as they have an insight into both the cultures as well as first-hand experience. Another alternative proposed by a group of participants was the appointment of a principal mentor and a couple of sub-mentors who can be approached in case of problematic situations. This could be termed as a multiple mentoring system.

'Mentors and the mentoring system' was one of the topics which created great confusion and doubts in the minds of the members present. They emphasized the need to define what the term 'qualified mentoring' means as no guidelines or criteria are available on the selection of a mentor. They added that the volunteers themselves have a wide range of qualifications which range from high school students to graduates. Thus finding a 'responsible mentor' for the volunteers could be a difficult task if no basic qualifications of the mentor are mentioned. To minimise the problem of searching for individual mentors for the various Partner Organisations the

participants asked if their organisation could appoint one qualified mentor for several organisations.

In addition to that, they also expressed their concerns regarding the image of India which is being relentlessly circulated by the German media. They recommended that the input of the volunteers who have returned to Germany should be considered by the media to introduce a new dimension in their reports about the country. India should be promoted to become or remain the most preferred destination for volunteers.

Another request recurrently made by all the participants present was the sensitisation of the youth in Germany regarding issues of safety and security. Considering the fact that some renowned Sending Organisations have stopped sending female volunteers to India the participants reacted vehemently by stating that necessary steps must be taken to influence reports of the image of India in Germany. The German press reports give the impression that rapes and criminalities only take place in India or that India has the highest rate of criminalities in the world. A participant forcefully expressed his point of view by stating that there are many other countries which have a higher level of criminalities and India is being captured by the press only because people seem to be increasingly raising their voice against all that is unjust. Thus, it is high time according to the participants, to involve the German media, volunteers and other stakeholders to clear the minds of future and current volunteers of all prejudices where safety and security in India is concerned.

As a measure to strengthen volunteer-networking in India the members of the various Partner Organisations propounded the concept of a volunteer summit of all the volunteers in Delhi.

Concerning networking amongst Partners in India, the establishment of a weltwärts googlegroup of the participants of the Partner Conference was suggested (and immediately implemented). Beyond that, it

was suggested that a Partners' Directory could be established enlisting all the Partner Organisations active in India. This could be utilised to exchange know-how, hands-on application models and an overall better networking.

In order to give a better structure to the weltwärts programme the members of the Partner Organisations suggested the documentation of the various phases emerging from the programme. Documentation of best practices, of the networking done by the various Partner Organisations as well as the counselling done by the mentors would be of great significance for all the participants. Regarding the North-South programme, the participants believed that the sharing of the volunteer reports by the Sending Organisation to the Partner Organisation is very important.

Another significant aspect that the participants emphasized on was regarding the budget allotted for the lodging and boarding and well as the pocket money of the volunteers. It is a well known fact that the cost of living is increasing unstoppably in India. The sum of money allocated for each volunteer should be adjusted according to these inflated prices. In metropolises like Delhi and in cities with ever increasing urbanisation like Nagpur it is eventually becoming nearly impossible to accommodate the volunteers, pay the electricity bills in the accommodations as well as incur other costs arising due to the lodging and boarding. Thus the members stated vehemently that the financial aspect needs to be looked into.

Apart from all the critical appreciation done by the participants present in the Partner Conference there were also a variety of positive comments made by the Receiving Organisations about the concept of the weltwärts Volunteer Programme. They were convinced that the programme has significantly contributed to the strengthening of ties between India and Germany. They also mentioned various ways in which volunteers took part not only in the

social and cultural aspect of the Programme but also the developmental one, which is actually the most integral part of it. A few partners seemed impressed with the love and commitment some of the volunteers showed towards the projects and tasks assigned to them. They were also pleasantly surprised by the willingness of the volunteers to adapt to the Indian culture. For a few organisations they were considered a part of the family. The volunteers joyfully participated in local Indian festivals and other occasions. They even shared friendly relationships with the target groups at the grass root level. The members expressed with great pleasure that many volunteers have brought in several moments of happiness and efficiency in the NGOs by helping in arranging various programmes like health camps, women unions and several events for the youth. One of the members of the Partner Organisations also enthusiastically mentioned that one of his volunteers painted a shelter home for platform children. Another participant then described how a volunteer started an English class for the slum youth which the new batches of volunteers have been continuing. The feedback reports made the volunteers, their suggestions to the organisation and their journey reports have helped in professionalising the work of the organisation and giving it a better structure. Many volunteers also gave extraordinarily positive feedbacks to their Receiving Organisations and were thoroughly convinced that their organisations had shaped their lives in various ways. The members of the various Receiving Organisations also said that the volunteers played the role of ambassadors of their Organisations in Germany.

It was appreciated very highly by several participants of the Partner Conference, that even a representative of the Ministry undertook the effort to come to Nagpur to attend the Partner Conference and was all the time approachable and did not show any sign of high-handedness which Indian Partners are often used to from Indian Government officials. The involvement and presence of the PSA-members also showed the participants that the various Part-

ner Organisations' work is being appreciated, recognised and interest is being taken in their work across the continents. This propagates a feeling of working together globally towards the common goal of Global Learning and mutual understanding.

All in all the Partner Conference thus gave way to many new ideas, suggestions, criticism and appreciation of the composite structure of the weltwärts Programme. It also helped in strengthening the ties between developmental organisations in India and Germany and was the first step taken to strengthen networking between various stakeholders involved in the programme. There was a lot of contentment among the various participants as they got the opportunity to personally interact with people from the two countries they had always been in contact with professionally but did not have the chance to meet.

Topics like Volunteering, Mentoring, Networking, Roles of various stakeholders, selection processes, Expectations of the various parties involved, doubts and concerns regarding the programme as well as several happy moments and success stories were openly shared and profoundly discussed about by all present on the four days of the conference.

The Programme Steering Committee finally expressed great appreciation to the participants, the DIZ and the Sangam for their open minded efforts of promoting the feeling of togetherness. The members of the Quality Association stated that they observed a good quality of discussion among the participants and stated that their efforts towards networking would help strengthen Civil Society.

The participants praised the general atmosphere of the Partner Conference and said they would take along many memories to be shared with their Organisations.

weltwärts 

# Partner Conference 2014

November 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>,  
in Nagpur, India.



weltwärts 

# Partner Conference 2014

November 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>,  
in Nagpur, India.

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) the Deutsch-Indische Zusammenarbeit (DIZ) together with its anchor partner, the Ecumenical Sangam, Nagpur, had the privilege to host the Partner Conference for the second time.