



# connect for change

Shaping global education partnerships  
and projects for change

**Handbook**

# **connect** for **change**

Shaping global educational partnerships  
and projects for change



Verein Niedersächsischer  
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Further information:  
[www.connect-for-change.org](http://www.connect-for-change.org)

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## Opening remarks

*By Stephan Weil, Prime Minister of Lower Saxony/Germany*



“Connect for Change” was the motto of the international conference on global learning that brought together people from different parts of the world to connect with each other and exchange views on the role and importance of international education partnerships and projects. The participants had the opportunity to share their experiences, present their work and discuss how to further develop their approaches across borders.

I am very pleased that this conference, which was the product of the joint efforts of many actors in the field of education, attracted such broad and active participation. As Prime Minister of Lower Saxony, I would like to take this opportunity to emphasise that political institutions and actors from educational institutions and civil society are all working towards the same goal. Together, we are charting a common course towards a fairer, more sustainable world.

As is widely known, access to high-quality education is a key factor for global success, in addition to being of the 17 sustainable development goals of the United Nations. “Connect for Change” has contributed to the realisation of this ambitious goal by supporting activists in their efforts to build and design new educational partnerships.

I wish you every success in continuing the dialogue initiated by this educational conference!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephan Weil". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stephan Weil  
Prime Minister of Lower Saxony/Germany

# Opening remarks

*By Grant Hendrik Tonne, Minister for Education of Lower Saxony/Germany*

Numerous schools in Lower Saxony are involved in international school partnerships and organise global learning projects together with schools from all over the world. As Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs of Lower Saxony, it is a special pleasure for me to witness these diverse and vibrant international educational partnerships and projects. Challenges such as climate change can only be solved through global cooperation to achieve the UN's 17 sustainable development goals, which should start with children and young people.



As part of the "Connect for Change" project, teachers, young people and educators from schools and civil society groups in Lower Saxony and the Global South have drawn on their diverse experiences, engaged in critical reflection and inspired each other to further develop their global educational partnerships.

The present handbook contains a wide range of ideas and suggestions for how local and international educational actors can further enhance and support academic innovation processes in the spirit of transformative education. The handbook thus encourages discussion of key development issues:

How can non-hierarchical communication educational partnerships be successful even in the face of inequitable conditions?

How can people be encouraged to adopt educational approaches that are critical of colonialism and racism?

How can global education partnerships and projects facilitate active participation and a sense of agency on the part of young people?

I would like to thank all those involved in the project and in compiling this handbook for their important and innovative contributions to strengthening and developing global learning.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Grant Hendrik Tonne". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Grant Hendrik Tonne  
Minister of Education of Lower Saxony/Germany

*What makes global education dialogue so important right now?*

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The editorial team

Detailed information about the projects and a documentation of the international conference is available at [www.connect-for-change.de](http://www.connect-for-change.de)

## Foreword

*By Sören Barge, Gabriele Janecki and Sarah Laustroer*

How can international education partnerships and projects contribute to global change? How can they be both successful and equitable? How can we learn from each other and take action together? The “Connect for Change” project has brought together participants from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America who are actively addressing these and other questions through education partnerships and projects.

This project took place against the background of the many challenges facing the global community: forest fires, climate change and the exploitation of natural resources; social inequality; the repression of peaceful protests and a shrinking space for civil society; the rise of extreme right-wing and nationalist movements; and global health crises such as the Covid 19 pandemic. In the face of these global problems, some might be prompted to ask the following question: Are international education partnerships and projects mere cosmetic exercises, a luxury that we permit ourselves in a world that seems to have spiralled out of control?

But our answer, that of the project team and our partners from all over the world, is an emphatic NO. We firmly believe in the transformative power of learning and education through global partnerships. We all live in ONE world full of connections and interdependencies. The above-mentioned challenges do not stop at national borders, and global educational cooperation a necessary precondition for change rather than a luxury.

On the road towards a more sustainable world, economic and social models and political frameworks need to change. However, we also need changes in attitudes and behaviour, which is where global educational dialogue comes into play. It facilitates the exploration of diverse concepts, visions and philosophies, exchanges of information and learning from each other. This enables us to examine our own perspectives and values and to recognise and overcome stereotypes and prejudices. Knowing that people all over the world take action creates a sense of solidarity and may inspire people to get involved themselves. All these factors are prerequisites for promoting the emergence of conscious and active agents of change, which the world urgently needs.

This is what inspired us to launch the “Connect for Change” project. Through workshops, project visits and an international conference, young people, teachers and representatives from schools, civil society and educational authorities and institutions examined the challenges and the conditions for success, critically reflected and exchanged views on their own practice, and motivated and inspired each other to further develop their work.

## A handbook for orientation and inspiration

The results of these activities and reflections provided the basis for this handbook. It contains contributions from experts from all over the world and aims to serve as a source of inspiration and guidance for the establishment, design and further development of global education partnerships and projects.

The entire handbook follows a modular structure. In each chapter or subchapter, you will find texts with background information and tips for your own work, supplemented by project presentations, comments, practical methods and further information. The project presentations also offer suggestions for best practices. In testimonials, active participants in education partnerships and projects describe the challenges and the preconditions for success from their own perspective. Some chapters outline methods that are aligned with the respective thematic focus. Finally, we also provide an overview of the relevant terms, methodologies, possibilities for action, financing options, advisory services, etc., while the QR codes on the upper corners of some pages lead to collections of links on our website.

The handbook begins with a utopian vision of what education, partnerships and the world might look like in 2035. Looking back from this future, Chapter 1 describes the historical context shaping our world in general and our educational work in particular. We present contemporary approaches to social-ecological change and the associated concept of Global Learning. The aim of Chapter 2 is to motivate you to set out on your own journey. It contains tips on how to find partners, create a common basis for the partnership and develop a work plan. Chapter 3 provides suggestions and tips for the practical implementation of international education partnerships and projects, from the sustainable implementation of joint activities and how to structurally embed them in your organisation to successful public relations work, the creation of participatory learning spaces, tips on travel arrangements, funding, the options for getting external advice and data protection. Finally, Chapter 4 focuses on how you can reflect on, evaluate and secure your partnership or project in the long term. At the end of this chapter, you will find a checklist of the requirements for successful global educational cooperation. For each requirement, we indicate the relevant chapters where you can delve deeper into the topic and learn what the path to success might look like.

We hope that this handbook will provide ideas and tips for the implementation of your own international education partnerships and projects and motivate you to embark on the path towards a more just and sustainable world together with your partners.

”

*International education partnerships are no longer expressions of individual will or a luxury – they are a necessity, a modern way of life. This necessity is a result of the sheer scale of globalisation. Education cannot be confined to the limits of one institution, one country or one region. We must give the youth wings to take flight, and they can only acquire these wings within the framework of international education partnerships.*

**Dr. Kakhaber Eradze**  
*Deputy Director of the National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement in Tbilisi, Georgia*



# Global education partnerships in 2035 – looking back from the future

By Timo Holthoff

*Let's imagine a utopian scenario for our global educational partnerships in 2035 and then trace our way back – what steps have we taken, today, tomorrow and in the coming years, to make this utopia a reality? This is an invitation to start by dreaming big and then to work towards this utopia in a bold and concrete manner, letting ourselves be guided by unknown possibilities rather than alleged impossibilities.*

*It is the year 2035. The UN High Commissioner for the Liquidation of the Capitalist Industrial Age, Greta Thunberg, gives a speech at the UN headquarters in Kinshasa on the occasion of Global Learning Day:*

“15 years ago, I took to the streets together with UN Secretary General Vanessa Nakate and many others from the Fridays for Future movement to demand effective action against climate change and a just future for all people. We were desperate and worried about the future.

Back then, none of us would have dreamed that 15 years later, the ecosocial transition would be the self-evident benchmark for all economic and political action. Our house is no longer on fire. The flames have been extinguished and from their ashes, seedlings of change are sprouting everywhere. In all parts of the world, people are laying stone upon stone to rebuild the foundations of our house. The world stands united in solidarity to mitigate the consequences of climate change. The wealth reduction programmes that we launched 15 years ago on the road towards a common good economy are now bearing fruit. Our generation has the opportunity, for the first time after centuries of violence, divisions and exploitation of humanity and nature, to achieve global justice in harmony with Mother Earth. We are closer than ever to realising the dream of a global community in which unity and diversity go hand in hand. Our civilisation is now facing the dawn of a new age.

The 2020 global coronavirus pandemic and the economic and social disruption it caused served as a wake-up call. We, as humanity, resolved not to return to the normal state before the coronavirus crisis. We understood that what we had been calling normal was the real crisis. We learned that crises cannot be overcome by an economic system designed to maximise profits rather than the common good. We learned that nationalism does not offer solutions in a globally connected world. We learned that material

goods make people less happy than social goods such as cohesion, community, mindfulness, creative freedom and meaningful action, yet without neglecting the fact that the basic material needs and freedoms of ALL people must be guaranteed. For I am unable to be free and happy if others are unfree and unhappy because of me.

We experienced what profound changes we can achieve within a short period of time – if we really put our minds to it, if we consider them to be without alternative and if we all work together to make them happen. We transferred the determination, courage and creativity of the political and collective action that we used to tackle the coronavirus to other crises, namely to climate change and global inequality. Social movements took their protests and their spirit of optimism from the streets to city halls, parliaments and company headquarters all over the world. The representatives of the old system either had to step aside or were infected by this enthusiasm, for ours was and is a struggle of love, not hate. A life based on hope in a world that is there for everyone – that is what counts today!

On the occasion of today's Global Learning Day, I would like to emphasise the importance of global education partnerships. They have been and continue to be a crucial part of this transformation. 15 years ago, we had to admit to ourselves that our habitual ways of thinking and patterns of action were ill-suited to finding solutions for the future – that we have more questions than answers and that there is more than one truth and one true path. We understood that we had to address our questions together at a global level, to learn from each other and to experiment with different approaches. We realised that it is precisely the people whose knowledge and experience were suppressed for centuries who must now be seen and heard.



“Pachamama - Mother Earth”  
by Angie Vanessa Cardenas Roa

Today, we can celebrate the fact that we have established a global culture of learning and dialogue in which mutual exchanges and cooperation are a matter of course, and in which the monopoly of the European knowledge model has been broken – in which we have finally secured historical justice by means of a balance of stories, as the great Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe put it. An important factor in this process was the revolutionary shift from so-called development cooperation to transformation cooperation. Instead of sending so-called experts from the Global North to the South, as was the case for 60 years, today we are seeing open-ended and equitable exchanges between experts from all countries and in all countries. With support from Rwanda, Germany was able to put its economy on a sustainable footing, for example, while the USA, following the Ecuadorian example, incorporated the rights of nature into its constitution.

What began with small programmes, often belittled as idealistic, on the part of individual associations, municipalities, schools, companies and public institutions, has grown steadily over the years into a dynamic global network in which learning from one another – from both successes and failures – is now commonplace, enabling us to coordinate our actions wherever and whenever we cannot act alone. Most importantly, this network is not limited to so-called experts, but includes all kinds of people from all over the world – so that today, everyone is considered an expert. Today, numerous partnerships large and small are enriching the global discussion and the local efforts for achieving a better life with proposals for solutions and concrete coordinated action. We are thus witnessing a true movement of world citizens.

Joint learning and cooperation with children, young people and adults from other countries are now the norm in the diverse places of learning of today's educational settings, which used to be known as schools. We have successfully harnessed the opportunities offered by digitalisation for the purposes of interpersonal connections rather than for additional growth and efficiency. Today, we are once again the same playful, curious and eager-to-learn creatures that we were born to be.

On this day of celebration, I invite you all to look back and remember what you contributed and why you were able to accomplish what you did. For there is much still to be learned and done for the future.”

”

*We become the hope, we become the change.  
We widen the circle.  
We lend our ears, and we reach out.  
We widen the circle.*

Lines from a song created during the “Connect for Change” conference



Group photo: Organizers and participants of the “Connect for Change” conference in autumn 2019

”

### ***In the blink of the eye***



*Your Yesterday, Your Today, Your Tomorrow is in a blink of an eye. How you see yourself it's what you become only when you put some efforts on it.*

*Everything can change in just a blink of an eye.*

*A small township girl who had nothing to share, nothing to give, no hope, no future, no dreams for tomorrow.*

*But in the blink of an eye doors opened, dreams started.*

*The eye started to blink faster than the normal way.*

*By the blinking of an eye things start to happen beyond the naked eye.*

*The girl became non original, she allowed to be led by hundreds of people in her life and to be mentored.*

*She crossed the oceans, seas, rivers, mountains, clouds to go around the world to seek for wisdom and freedom.*

*She found peace and love instead and found the wisdom back at home in her doorsteps.*

*She changes lives of many, brings hope and open opportunities in the blink of an eye.*

*In the blink of an eye you can start to see things in a different way only if you open your circle bigger.*

*What we see in people may change how they see the world.*

*The material things do not determine the ability of your brain and your strength to make change in this world.*

*A blink, blinked and blinking of an eyes, together we can make this a better world for everyone... In the blink of my eye I see No North, No South, No East, No West pole but the circle of love, harmony, solidarity, happiness, togetherness.*

*In the blink of an eye bring the change what you want to see  
ONE WORLD*

***Nomatlou Mahlangu***

*Founder of the Golden Youth Club*

*and member of Peer Leader International, South Africa*



Drawing by Lucas  
Somdumuni Ndala

# 1 SHAPING THE WORLD TOGETHER!?

Historical background, concepts and potentials of transformative learning

This handbook is fuelled by the utopian vision of an equal partnership between all countries and people of the world. It is based on the conviction that only together we can build a more equitable future. However, the frequent emphasis, in the context of South-North cooperation, on partnerships “on an equal footing” clearly shows that there is no such thing as an equal footing to begin with. After all, the relations between Europe and the Global South over the past 500 years have been anything but cooperative. Global education projects and partnerships cannot brush this history aside but must instead deal with it. Dealing with this shared past is therefore a prerequisite for jointly shaping the future. For this reason, this chapter will start by examining this past and its implications for the present. It will then take a closer look at the potential of global education projects and partnerships to bring about a more socially and ecologically sustainable world.



## 1.1 A utopian vision in the shadow of colonialism

By Timo Holthoff

*Which historical structures continue to shape our world today?*

As a result of the enslavement, Christianisation and colonisation of large parts of the world carried out by European states, we are confronted with a history of oppression, exploitation and annihilation of entire societies. In doing so, Europe primarily pursued power politics and economic interests, accompanied, however, by attempts to morally legitimise this domination of the rest of the world by means of the racist myth of white supremacy. In accordance with this ideology, the societal structures, beliefs, economic practices and know-how of colonised peoples were devalued and systematically destroyed, even to the point of depriving them of their humanity. European views of the world and human nature were violently imposed on them. And all this happened not so long ago: the age of colonialism only came to an end about 50 years ago.



In Berlin/Germany, there are still streets named after former colonial rulers, which activists argue should be renamed to honour freedom fighters, for example.



### The legacy of colonialism: global inequality is no coincidence

The effects of this history can be felt on many levels. To a large extent, today's global inequality is based on the system of exploitation established during colonial times, especially the global division of labour, in which resources are extracted cheaply in the Global South and then processed at great profit in the North. The history of colonialism is thus by no means a thing of the past: through unjust economic and trade structures, Europe continues to boost its prosperity at the expense of countries and people in other parts of the world. As such, all of us, in both the Global North and the Global South, are closely linked together as individuals: for example, through low prices for goods – such as chocolate or clothing – in the Global North and low wages, poor working conditions and ecological consequences in the Global South. So-called “development aid” by no means compensates for this imbalance. On the contrary, the promise of public “development funds” is often tied to economic policy conditions, such as the opening of markets to European products, which perpetuate imbalances and dependencies. Consequently, inequality is neither a matter of destiny or chance, but rather a result of historically entrenched power relations. Poverty is intertwined with wealth.

The Global South and the Global North are not (merely) geographical terms, but political concepts. The Global North is comprised of countries and people whose structural privilege and power are the result of deeply rooted systems of global inequality. The Global South consists of countries and people that have been structurally discriminated against and marginalised by this system. Accordingly, Australia as a country and national economy, forms part of the Global North, for instance, but Australia's Aborigines belong to the Global South. These terms are helpful constructs for designating structural differences without using the phrase “developing countries”, which has pejorative connotations and depoliticises global inequality.

## Cultural traces of colonialism affecting the South and the North

Yet the painful legacy of colonialism extends beyond global economic structures. Former colonial societies are still struggling to heal the wounds of this historical trauma. Their national borders, political and educational systems as well as their official languages are in many respects European imports and thus perpetuate the problems of foreign rule. Many sectors of society were never in effect decolonised – or continue to be colonised by the economic and cultural hegemony of the North, for example in the context of development cooperation. In some states (especially in Latin America), descendants of European settlers still enjoy economic and political supremacy, while indigenous populations still struggle to gain their independence and freedom.



”

*However, this should not cause us to reject educational partnerships as a whole – on the contrary, given that they harbour the potential to change people and the world in a positive way. Instead, we should be asking ourselves how these partnerships come about and examine their goals, their content and their quality: How can the above-mentioned challenges be dealt with collectively in order to get closer to the vision of equal cooperation for a just world? How can the full learning potential of educational partnerships be unlocked for all participants?*

**Timo Holthoff**  
Trainer and facilitator for  
transformative and  
decolonised education,  
Germany

However, colonialism has also left its cultural mark in Europe: The belief in the superiority of or lack of alternatives to the European economic and social model, which has been critically termed Eurocentrism, still dominates the thinking of most people in Europe, at least unconsciously. This is usually associated with an attitude that dismisses alternative models in the Global South as backward and flawed. Even if colonialism is now widely recognised as a historical crime, the idea still persists that the South must “develop” along the lines of the North – for which it needs the “help” of well-meaning Europeans. Whether well-intentioned or not, this condescending view of the world, which is based on the provision of assistance and the associated images of self and other, perpetuate the racist ideology of colonialism: a necessary „civilising of the backward“, following the European path of development. These patterns of thought, stereotypes and prejudices permeate the political discussions and media coverage of poor countries and refugees, the fundraising activities of aid organisations and even parts of academic discourse. In more subtle ways, they can also be found in everyday educational contexts – for example in children’s songs, carnival costumes, school books or school aid projects.

These patterns are learned and reproduced in equal measure, largely independent of educational backgrounds and political convictions. A cosmopolitan mindset, which probably underlies all global partnerships in education, therefore does not immunise people against racist colonial attitudes and behaviour. As difficult as it may be to accept, they are part of a 500-year old cultural legacy that has so far hardly been processed. Europe also needs to decolonise itself, both mentally and emotionally, and with regards to the role it plays in the world. This necessary learning process is not a matter of individual guilt, but of collective responsibility.

## Education in a post-colonial context

Educational projects and partnerships between countries of the Global South and North continue to be shaped by colonial dynamics, given that the historically entrenched structures of inequality also manifest themselves in this field. This is easily apparent, for example, whenever European project participants have no trouble travelling to partner countries while European visas are extremely difficult to obtain. At the same time, the financial resources for such partnerships mostly come from the Global North. European partners (or their sponsors) thus often unilaterally determine the framework for educational partnerships and thereby take on a dominant role. Especially where this is combined with donation activities for projects in the South, a dynamic of givers and takers quickly develops, which creates dependencies and reproduces stereotypical relations and images. This makes it difficult to foster a culture of honest feedback and mutual learning on an equal footing.

connectforchange



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### *How to decolonise education within international educational partnerships*

*Decolonising education means that a country becomes independent in its acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits. Decolonising education within international education partnerships would mean deploying the respective partners and platforms to transform such colonial education systems into independent curricula.*

*For international partnerships to play a role in the decolonisation of education, they need to be based on RESPECT for and ACCEPTANCE of differences and diversity. The common ground should be the promotion of human rights and the protection of our planet. Nevertheless, the ways to achieve them should not be forced to be the same worldwide. One of the main tasks for international partnerships is therefore to join up with local partners and to support them in defining their own education systems.*

*The introduction of an independent decolonised curriculum needs resources. However, the provision of these resources should not be linked to a conditionality of “dos and don’ts”, as this would mean a new form of colonial dominance. Once a curriculum has been established, the partners should test and try it out in an appreciative manner. By doing so, negative stereotypes, such as the belief that other forms of learning and education than those introduced by the colonial system are barbaric and primitive, can be overcome at a global level. This would help the international community to recognise the unique and yet equal teaching and learning approaches of each community on this globe.*

**Geoffrey Nsubuga**, National coordinator of Somero Uganda



### School partnership

## “In the past and yet present” – searching for traces of (German) colonialism

Msitu wa Tembo Secondary School in Moshi, Tanzania and  
the Helene-Lange-Schule in Hanover, Germany

Our partnership started in 2009. In the ten years since, students and teachers have met annually, either in Tanzania or in Germany, despite the great distance between the two countries. Between visits, we regularly exchange information via email, WhatsApp and video conferencing.

Our partnership is mainly focused on the planning and implementation of joint projects. These projects not only promote intercultural exchange, but also address topics related to the SDGs.

In 2019, after several projects related to environmental issues (e.g. water, solar energy, nutrition, reforestation), we decided to process our “common” colonial past together. This sensitive topic requires a cooperation based on trust in which there is also room for a change of perspective, which was possible thanks to our longstanding partnership. The topic was met with great interest in

both schools. In addition to working through our shared history, the aim was also to identify and classify our own stereotypes and prejudices and to develop a deeper understanding of each other. The purpose of the project was therefore not only to shed light on the past, but also to illustrate its impact on the historical consciousness in both countries.

During the encounter in Moshi, Tanzania, we visited many colonial sites, following a lecture by a history professor from the University of Arusha who also provided expert advice. The first step in our project work was to locate, document and research the relics of colonialism and their various functions. We encountered many historical sites (more than expected), including a railway line, Christian churches and former German administrative buildings, which taught us a great deal about the past. We were particularly impressed by the small museum in Moshi, which features an exhibition about the resistance fighter Mangi Meli. He was executed and his head was taken to Germany to be measured in line with racist criteria.

This led to long discussions among all participants, during which we all learned a lot (from each other). As it turned out, we had a somewhat different understandings of history: While the German participants regarded this period as a “dark chapter” in their history, the Tanzanian students perceived some aspects of colonialism as something positive from which Tanzania was able to benefit, eventually contributing to the country’s independence.

However, we did arrive at the common conclusion that colonial rule was devastating for the people of German East Africa, and that this foreign domination has left many traces that are still in evidence today.

During the return visit to Hanover, we aim to continue this research project and our discussions about the effects of the colonial legacy up to the present day (post-colonialism). For this purpose, we are planning to create a virtual city tour of places with a colonial connection based on the “Actionbound” app.

[www.facebook.com/msituwatembo](https://www.facebook.com/msituwatembo)  
[www.t1p.de/helene-lange-schule](https://www.t1p.de/helene-lange-schule)



Military barracks from the colonial era



Visit to a monument commemorating Christian missionaries

## 1.2 “Educational cooperation” – learning and action spaces for transformation at local and global level

By Timo Holthoff

*How could the path to a sustainable and equitable world through education look like?*

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The latest news about the SDGs:  
[www.globalgoals.org](http://www.globalgoals.org)

In 2015, the UN member states adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The so-called Agenda 2030 defines 17 goals for promoting global justice and sustainability and identifies the need for change at all levels and in all countries of the world. The countries of the Global North are thus also defined as in need of development – a revolutionary step after centuries of dividing the world into developed and developing countries. This takes into account that living conditions in the Global South cannot be improved without transforming the structural conditions dominated by the Global North – and while the North continues to secure its prosperity at the expense of the South. At the same time, it has finally been acknowledged that the social systems of the Global North are by no means exemplary when it comes to enabling people to lead a good life. It is becoming increasingly clear that the capitalist economic system, in which the exploitation and destruction of human and nature are systematically embedded, is doomed to failure. It is therefore unlikely that the SDGs can be achieved through minor reforms of the existing system. In fact, what is probably needed is a fundamental change in our economic system, our way of life and the cultural foundations of both. This kind of radical change is increasingly being referred to as the ecosocial transition of the world. It has become clear that this change is a shared human responsibility that needs government action, but also requires companies, civil society and individuals to do their part, within the means at their disposal.

### Global problems require global cooperation

Our actions affect our immediate surroundings, but also – often without noticing it – other parts of the world. Many challenges can no longer be solved at the national level, but require cooperation across national borders, climate change and climate justice being a prominent example. In such an interconnected world, nationalist approaches are unable to provide answers for the future – both for the people whom they exclude and for those who are included. We need to move closer together and see ourselves as part of a larger whole that can provide a dignified home for everyone and that we therefore have to preserve. This requires mutual understanding, global solidarity and joint action.



**A Global South perspective on the SDGs**

*The SDG frameworks of global action, as well-meaning as they are in their articulation, also point to certain sections of populations as the source of the problem of global imbalances.*

*When SDG 1 aspires for "No Poverty" this clearly attacks people who are poor, rather than the mechanisms that propel poverty and create unequal economic societies.*

*When SDG 4 aspires for "Quality Education" this targets those who are illiterate, rather than the systems that leave out many people from attaining a basic education.*

*We need new narratives and a new vocabulary: Instead of "No Poverty" we could use "End Capitalism" or "End the Accumulation of Wealth in a Few Hands". Instead of "Quality Education" we could say "Honour Traditional Knowledge Systems" or "Learn from Lived Wisdom and Experiences".*

*The gaps between access to basic education and Education for Sustainable Development in the Global South are colossal, and addressing these should be the primary task of international educational partnerships, if we hope to realize sustainable justice.*

**Ruby Hembrom**  
Founder of adivaani, India

## THE GLOBAL GOALS

For Sustainable Development



## Transformative Education for the ecosocial transition

The necessary changes cannot and must not be decreed from above or left to a small minority. They must involve the participation of many people and broad social movements. Education plays an important role in this regard. It provides the means and methods that help people to transform not only themselves but also the structures of society. In a world where our approaches to solving problems often revolve around the familiar, education has a special role to play: it can disrupt ideas of what is considered normal, broaden horizons, make the supposedly impossible thinkable and tangible and awaken courage and hope. It can offer spaces for creating critical awareness of the world around us, sensitise us to global challenges, inspire enthusiasm for change, develop utopian visions and empower us to act individually and collectively and to become socially and politically active.

Transformative education is not only about acquiring additional knowledge, but at least as much about questioning our existing knowledge and view of the world – in other words, it is sometimes concerned with unlearning certain patterns of thought, meaning and behaviour that stand in the way of transformation. It is about a critical and emancipatory education that enables people to break free from the narrow intellectual and emotional shackles that have been imposed on them in the course of their socialisation. It is about a participatory education that creates spaces for experimentation instead of defining educational content. It is about a loving education that values talent and diversity in a radical manner while strengthening people’s curiosity and enjoyment in learning and acting together – beyond normative pressures to perform. It is about building global relationships, forming powerful bonds of empathy and creating connections.



At Silent Climate Parades, demonstrators dance to music broadcast via headphones, with the aim of raising awareness about climate change



## Overview

# Concepts shaping global education partnerships

## Global learning/global citizenship education (GCE)

Global learning refers to educational activities that focus on addressing global issues and the responsibility and positioning of learners within global contexts. It provides orientation by building bridges between learners' own lives and the rest of the world and supports them in evaluating these connections on the basis of ethical principles. At the same time, it also serves as an approach for political education: the guiding principle is a global transformation in the spirit of global justice. To this end, it enables and encourages learners to recognise and critically question social, cultural, political and economic structures and contexts that influence the lives of all people in the world and to actively change them as responsible (global) citizens.

[www.globaleslernen.de](http://www.globaleslernen.de) | <https://en.unesco.org/themes/gced>

## Education for sustainable development (ESD)

Development is sustainable if people worldwide, today and in the future, are able to live in dignity and to pursue their needs and talents within the planet's limits while recognising cultural diversity. In order to achieve this, social structures and individual behaviour must be transformed. ESD thus uses interactive, research-based and action-oriented methods. It enables learners to understand the effects of their own actions on the world and to make responsible, sustainable decisions. It promotes core competencies such as critical and systemic thinking, cooperative decision-making and taking responsibility for present and future generations. It supports learners in creating a sustainable environment and convincing others of a sustainable way of living.

[www.bne-portal.de](http://www.bne-portal.de) | <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development>

## Transcultural learning and diversity

Within this broad field of concepts, it becomes possible to define learning processes that relate to the perception of and respect for the ways of life and the cultural and personal identities of others. Wherever learners come into contact and interaction with others who are supposedly "strangers", differences as well as similarities become apparent. More recent approaches such as transcultural learning posit that each individual has a highly complex identity, which is determined, inter alia, through socialisation, a particular way of life shaped by various influences, cultural and religious orientations, (dis)privileges, social power relations and experiences. Through encounters, learners can discover these identity factors, which contributes to the transformation of mental images and the dismantling of stereotypes and prejudices. The central aim is to build a (global) society free from discrimination where everyone is respected and acknowledged.

[www.t1p.de/transcultural-education](http://www.t1p.de/transcultural-education)  
[www.kulturshaker.de](http://www.kulturshaker.de)

## Forms of "global educational cooperation"

Any contact between people from the Global South and the North that is focused on learning from and with each other in the pursuit of jointly formulated topics and goals qualifies as a global education project. Such projects are often embedded in institutions: schools, universities, non-formal educational institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or local authorities. Often, they also involve cooperation between different of those actors. For example, schools may collaborate with NGOs that establish contacts with educational institutions in other countries and offer content and pedagogical guidance for school partnerships. Individual projects can turn into long-term partnerships in which all sides will feel motivated and committed to working together in the future. Projects and partnerships can take many different forms and avail themselves of diverse opportunities for learning together. Exchange programmes and visits are probably the most intensive form of cooperation. However, in addition to such resource-intensive initiatives, there are also many low-threshold opportunities for long-term and regular cooperation and programmes that enable larger numbers of people to participate. Alongside traditional pen-pal relationships, numerous digital tools for dialogue and exchange are currently emerging. In the school context, tapping into these various possibilities can culminate in a "global classroom", with joint teaching materials and learning projects that the participating teachers and students develop through continuous exchange. Cooperation between and with NGOs can give rise to transnational action groups that work towards common goals in their respective countries and contexts by means of learning exchanges – which may continue to engage learners even after they leave school.

Further reading on school partnerships: a brochure on "Global Learning within South-North School Encounters", which is available in English and German: [www.t1p.de/fachstelle-glis](http://www.t1p.de/fachstelle-glis)

connect4change



Exhibitions are one of the concrete products that can emerge from global educational partnerships



## The potentials for transformative learning

In this respect, global education projects and partnerships facilitate:

### Learning about global connections

They create opportunities for identifying abstract global connections in the concrete everyday life contexts of the actors involved. Almost every issue has a global dimension, meaning there are no limits to the possible topics and content.

### A change of perspective

They allow participants to reflect on and expand their view of the world, of their own lives and of specific issues by exposing them to other perspectives.

### Encounters and dialogue

They bring together people and their individual life stories and perspectives, rather than treating them as foils for the projection of certain cultural spheres, privileges or forms of discrimination. They allow people to recognise differences and similarities and bring them closer together.

### Building values of diversity, solidarity and cohesion

They enable learners to take an active part in the world and to relate emotionally to people that otherwise seem very distant. They shape people's values and attitudes and serve as a compass for action based on solidarity and respect. They help to process (colonial) history and strengthen participants' sense of responsibility for the future.

### Critical politicisation

Instead of a perspective based on "helping", they promote the recognition of structural links between inequality and the necessary political changes. They thus empower participants in their role as responsible and critical citizens.

### The development of shared utopias

They invite participants to dream together about a just world for all. They can create common visions, taking into account the respective perspectives and interests of those involved.

### The personal involvement of individuals and the development of their potential

They encourage participants not only to talk, but also to act. Through jointly designed and developed projects in their respective environments, participants can discover what they are passionate about and what they can accomplish if they work together. Through trial and error, learners can experience a sense of agency, empowering them to become an active participant in the transformation process.

### The creation of publicity

Through conscious public relations work, it becomes possible to critically examine stereotypical images in people's minds and to promote new, realistic and more diverse images.



Network members connecting at a conference in 2017



## Global network

# Learn2Change – changing the world through global dialogue in education

Educational activists from around the world

“Learn2Change – Global Network of Educational Activists” brings together civil society education activists from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Established in 2015, the network serves as a platform for the exchange, development and implementation of new learning approaches to promote global socio-ecological transformation. Through joint learning activities, partners from the Global South and the Global North investigate and disseminate unconventional knowledge and alternative social practices for global change.

### What we want to change:

We are working together because the world faces diverse and interlinked challenges that can only be tackled through global partnerships. And because the current “development model” based exclusively on economic growth can no longer adequately respond

to global problems such as climate change, environmental degradation, inequality and injustice. Any transformation towards a more socially and ecologically just world must be accompanied by a fundamental change in attitudes and actions. Well-informed, committed and courageous agents of change are needed at all levels of society, politics and business. Change can be shaped, and this is a task for all of us. But how can this be done? Learn2Change invites people to take part in the search for answers and in shaping change.

### What we do:

The members of Learn2Change are united by their belief in the transformative power of learning and education within global partnerships. The focus is not so much on imparting knowledge, but on asking questions and searching for new approaches. The aim is to transform awareness of global and local issues into commitment to change and action at the level of educational policy. To achieve this, we offer a wide range of educational formats. Working together with partners from the South and North, we exchange ideas on concepts, philosophies and approaches for alternative social practices, such as global citizenship, Buen Vivir, Ubuntu and the decolonisation of education. We test and disseminate methods that we consider valuable for broadening horizons, gaining learning experiences and stimulating action. Last but not least, our network members from the Global South and North share their personal learning stories and what motivates them into action. This creates a sense of global solidarity between learners and teachers. The fact that people all over the world are committed to global justice and sustainability motivates us to take action towards transformation on a local and global level.

### Interested in our network?

On our project homepage and in the book "Learn2Change – changing the world through education", we have published information about the Learn2Change network, as well as about our educational concepts, methods and learning stories. The homepage and the book are an invitation to join the Learn2Change network but also serve as a pool of ideas for starting your own networks and building and/or maintaining communities.

[www.learn2change-network.org](http://www.learn2change-network.org)



Outdoor group work on sustainability



"Living a good life", "the rights of Mother Earth" and "sustainability" – the guiding themes of the network



## **GLOBAL LEARNING**

*All minds have different intelligence,  
So we all perceive things differently.  
Yet there's absolutely no difference.  
It tells rather our power and competence.  
That's more reason we have to celebrate our differences.*

*Who is wise?  
One who is humble, forgiving and learns from all kinds of lives.  
What's learning if there's no exposure to reality and experience,  
Since experience is the best teacher.*

*Let's come together, people from different countries and build  
the Just World together.  
Coming together as one is just the beginning,  
Keeping together is great progress,  
But working together is success.  
"When spiders unite, they can tie down the lion"*

*Let's turn from our race, background and status and learn  
from each other.  
For we need diversity in thought to face life's new challenges.  
We all have something to offer,  
With the involvement of our Children, Disabled People, Individuals,  
Politicians,  
Government and Local Authorities.*

*Our subsequent generation awaits our efforts  
Let's unite, build and make the world A Just place.*

**Grace Esiadu**

*Student at the St. Germain School, Ghana*

## 2 FINDING THE WAY

### Launching a global education partnership

The start of a global education project or partnership can take many different forms: Schools, educational institutions or associations may want to work with international partners to expand their horizons, but don't have the relevant contacts yet. Perhaps personal contacts already exist, for example through migrants, pupils, students or volunteers who live or have lived in other regions or countries of the world. Finally, there may be existing international projects that primarily collect donations and pursue charitable purposes, but now want to implement educational projects in the spirit of a partnership on an equal footing.

This chapter provides suggestions for how to set up projects and partnerships in all three situations. Not only for newcomers, but also in the case of long-standing contacts, it makes sense to start by reflecting on the needs, the potential and the expectations of both sides regarding such a partnership. This chapter will then show how the partners can create a sound foundation of mutual trust for their joint project. It also offers tips and assistance for the concrete planning of education projects and for even more comprehensive global education partnerships.



## 2.1 Finding partners

By Sören Barge

### *What kind of partner matches our goals and interests?*

Global partnerships always bring together several different perspectives. When it comes to the planning of an international education partnership, it's therefore helpful to first of all identify the respective needs, opportunities and expectations of all the parties involved. Even if you don't have a partner organisation yet, this is a good starting point: it makes project planning much easier if each side is aware of its goals in advance. Often, there are unconscious, informal and non-transparent assumptions on both sides as to what an education project should look like. However, the communication and the process of finding a common path will be easier if both parties enter into the relationship with clear awareness and honesty. In the case of existing contacts, both sides can ask each other questions separately first before then comparing the answers as a next step.

### Method

## Mapping the project

**Aim:** The participants work out an overview of the (possible) actors, objectives, ideas and capabilities on their side of a potential partnership.

**Duration:** min. 60 min, up to 120 min

**Participants:** up to 15

**Materials:** a large sheet of paper (as large as possible), pens, coloured paper cards (one colour should be round, one colour square, one colour triangular)

**Procedure:** Write "Our project/our partnership" in the centre of the large sheet of paper. Based on the questions on the following page, you can "map" the project piece by piece: Start by collecting the (possible) actors on the round cards. Next, arrange them around the centre of the large sheet of paper in accordance with their current level of involvement in the project, either closer or further away. Continue by collecting the objectives and ideas of each actor on the square cards and placing them next to the round actor cards. Finally, collect the capabilities of each actor on the triangular cards and add them to the other cards. Actors who are personally taking part in this process (e.g. participating pupils or staff) should define their own objectives and capabilities. For the last two phases, the participants can also work in small groups dedicated to one actor each. Afterwards, the map can be used to determine the possible next steps: Which actors do we still want to add? What are the goals that we all agree on? What knowledge and capabilities do we already have and what is still missing?



## Overview

# Important cornerstones for the project design

### Actors: Who is actually involved?

Who is behind the idea of the global education project? Identify everyone who is already on board. Is it individuals, a whole group or an entire institution? For the development of the project it's very helpful to form a fixed group of people from all parties who are going to approach the project with joy and motivation. Make sure you are aware of the environment in which the group will operate: Who among your friends, in your association or school would support the idea and might even get involved? How can pupils or colleagues be enlisted to join the group? Are you also able to convince people with greater scope for action of the idea (headmasters, association leaders, mayors, parents...)? Also try to find possible supporters outside your organisation. For more information on collaborations between schools and civil society, see Chapter 3.2 and 3.9.

### Objectives and ideas: What do we want to achieve?

What are the objectives of the organisations and people involved in building the partnership? What ideas do they have in terms of the implementation or the possible focus areas? Which participants are already more or less in agreement, and where is there still need for discussion? What are the potential objectives of new actors that you are still trying to attract to the partnership? These will probably change over the course of the project and especially through the direct contact among the partners. However, it's important to agree on a common vision in advance so that everyone stays motivated and is aware of the goals being pursued. In any case, everyone should have a say and be involved in the decision-making process, both the main organisers (e.g. teachers) and future participants (e.g. pupils). The common goal can be quite simple and reflect the group's own interests, but it should include a concrete topic in line with the educational objectives.

### Capabilities: Who can contribute what?

What can the individual actors and group members do to make the partnership a success? Who has the necessary knowledge, talents and capabilities? On the one hand, such capabilities can be very helpful in the organisation of the partnership, and on the other hand they can also facilitate joint learning experiences: What experience and knowledge is available in your school or association regarding the chosen topic or the context in which the project is to take place? These don't have to be "professional" elements – in fact, in educational projects, it's more exciting to learn from the everyday (working) lives of the project partners. Look for best practices that have proven to be effective with regard to the topic and the promotion of a sustainable and just world. For example, these could be proven educational methods, political actions or sustainable behaviours. However, it's important not to view your own experiences and examples as the only right way or to attempt to lecture the project partners.



”

*Local authorities and leaders should participate in global educational partnership because of their important role in good governance for sustainable development. In workshops they can learn more about the important connection between the educational systems and governance structure. They are exposed to cultural differences and they are forced to be dynamic on how to use their leadership power structure. After a workshop, they are maybe able to use these partnership experience to develop new cultural policies to control their political leaderships back home. And they can give a bigger chance for the youth who participate in global educational partnerships to exercise governance power in their home countries and implement the skills and knowledge acquired.*

**Gilbert Kofi Germain**  
Teacher at the  
St. Germain School, Ghana

## The perfect partner organisation

In the following, this handbook will describe situations in which no contact with potential partners has yet been established. By clarifying your own point of view, you can gain many insights into what the ideal partner for your educational project would look like. In reality, however, this ideal partner probably doesn't exist. Therefore, it often makes sense to search for a partner based on a few characteristics and then to find a common basis and align your goals.

When it comes to selecting a partner organisation, the participants often choose a country or continent based on the topic at hand or their personal interests. In this process, it's important to remember the multitude of languages, religions, ethnic groups, landscapes, political situations or educational systems, especially within whole continents like Europe or Africa, but also within individual countries. The desire for a very general "partnership with a school in Africa/Europe", for example, should be critically questioned: What is the underlying simplistic image of the other continent? Why not establish a concrete, focused partnership between two schools on the German and Senegalese coasts, for example, since many people live by and with the sea in both places? It may also be helpful to answer the following questions: Can both sides work on a common issue in the context of a sustainable and just world? What are the necessary circumstances for this to happen? Where are there similarities? In the case of partners that you've found "by chance", for example through personal contacts, you should also look for:

- organisational similarities (e.g. primary, secondary or vocational school, association, educational institution, etc.)
- a common thematic focus (e.g. SDG issues such as inclusion, sustainable production/consumption, good governance, etc.)
- global issues that connect both sides (e.g. German colonialism, the supply chain of a pair of trousers, etc.)
- similar methodological approaches (e.g. theatre, political education, youth participation, etc.)

Particularly in partnerships between people from the Global North and South, there is also a great danger of unintentionally and unconsciously slipping into the "development aid" roles of donors and recipients. Projects based purely on donations don't fulfil the criteria of an educational partnership and should therefore be viewed critically. When selecting partners, you should pay attention to this issue in advance, in line with the goal of open communication about the roles of the partners. Ideally, this will lead to an expansion of the partnership to include joint topics and projects.

## How to actively look for partners

There are several ways to look for partners in a proactive way. It often helps to start in your immediate social and community environment. Frequently, international contacts already exist that could be suitable for a project: Migrants and their representative organisations often maintain close contact with their country/place of origin. Social institutions or trade unions can make use of their existing contacts. Former volunteers or professionals who have worked in countries of the Global North or South for a period of time (for example within the framework of the German “weltwärts” programme) can also help to build bridges. Existing partnerships at the city or municipality level may also act as a starting point. In addition, you can also arrange contacts through local associations in the field of development policy and international human rights. The possible advantages of such personal contacts include faster communication and a greater degree of commitment. However, the history of the relationship, which may be characterised by (financial) dependencies, conflicts and mutual stereotypes, may also pose certain challenges. You can also try to find completely new partners: For example, by researching a desired partner location on the internet. It’s also easy to find organisations with a particular focus. In addition, several internet databases are available that help schools and associations to find international partners.

connect for change

### Internet research portals

The Bridge-It initiative supports educational partnerships, especially among young people

[www.bridge-it.net](http://www.bridge-it.net)

The German Foreign Office’s virtual exchange for school partnerships

[www.partnerschulnetz.de/en](http://www.partnerschulnetz.de/en)

Go Global – the ESD Expert Net virtual school exchange

[www.esd-expert.net/go-global-virtual-school-exchange.html](http://www.esd-expert.net/go-global-virtual-school-exchange.html)

#### Contact options for selected countries:

IndienHilfe, Germany-India

[www.indienhilfe-deutschland.de/en](http://www.indienhilfe-deutschland.de/en)

Masifunde, Masifunde, Germany-South Africa

[www.masifunde.org](http://www.masifunde.org)

Koordinierungskreis Mosambik, Germany-Mozambique

[www.kkmosambik.de](http://www.kkmosambik.de)

The Global Experience, various countries

[www.theglobalexperience.org](http://www.theglobalexperience.org)

Kirchliche Arbeitsstelle südliches Afrika, Germany-southern Afrika

[www.kasa.de/ueber-uns/kasa-in-a-nutshell/](http://www.kasa.de/ueber-uns/kasa-in-a-nutshell/)





Climate brunch in Lüneburg



### Partnership of NGOs

## Alliance for global climate justice

Youth for Environment & Sustainable Development (YSD), Lilongwe, Malawi  
and Youth for Sustainable Development Germany e.V., Hameln, Germany

Our partnership consists of 5 to 10 young adults in either country and focuses on the drivers and impacts of climate change, which are unequally distributed between the Global North and the Global South. We share an understanding that racism and colonialism in its historic and present manifestations constitute the ideological basis for global injustices, such as the continued global imbalance in the response to climate change and other emerging global issues.

Every YSD member is an (educational) activist fighting for global climate justice. We share a similar vision, which allows us to feel connected and to act as allies for each other. Sharing our thoughts and resources makes us stronger and has enabled us to evolve into one big family, where everyone feels equally important. This has also led to greater tolerance for the diversity that exists within our partnership. Nevertheless, we think it is important to regularly reflect on the dynamics and the quality of our collaboration. To some extent, this has already been successful, but we are still learning together how to facilitate and improve this process of reflection.

YSD Malawi works with rural and urban communities – especially with youth and women – on natural resource management, environmental education and climate resilience interventions. In the implementation of its activities, the organisation uses a community-centred, inclusive and empowering approach that also includes indigenous perspectives. This has enabled us to establish in-depth collaborations with communities, local stakeholders and other NGOs across the nation, which has turned YSD into a well-known and recognised grassroots NGO in Malawi.

In 2015, YSD Malawi established a cooperation with YSD Germany. YSD Germany was originally founded to assist YSD Malawi in acquiring project funding from German sources. However, it soon became involved in educational activities in Germany, with a focus on the root causes of climate injustice and on encouraging people in Germany to work towards climate justice while questioning their own privileges within global power structures in order to eventually transform them. This cooperation is an important source of expertise, perspectives and knowledge for our educational activities in Germany, for example by means of video message from YSD Malawi team members.

By working together over the years, we have developed and improved the communication, mutual understanding and trust between the German and the Malawian group. Exchanging information about our specific situations, strategies and challenges has helped us to refine the process of planning and implementing projects together in a way that allows both organisations and the individual activists to develop their skills and resources. For communication, we use phone and internet, and a number of personal visits have also helped us to grow together as a team.

We are all strongly motivated to continue our cooperation, support each other's activities and develop joint programmes. To facilitate greater stability and flexibility, we hope to secure additional sources of funding in both countries. We have a joint website that we want to develop further and eventually turn into a learning platform for other partnerships. Our vision for the future also includes the creation of exchange programmes or opportunities, so that youth from Germany and Malawi can learn from each other and work on projects that address the same global challenge but from different perspectives – which is exactly what our cooperation is about.

[www.ysdalliance.org](http://www.ysdalliance.org)



Farmer training in Malawi



Educational activity in Germany

## 2.2 Creating common ground

By Sören Barge

*How can partners get to know each other in a respectful manner?*

A budding global education partnership brings together people who will initially be largely unknown to one another. Frequently, neither side has direct knowledge of the respective other location and the people living there, as this is precisely one of the reasons for such a partnership: to discover the daily lives of other people in the world. This goes hand in hand with the following expectation: “This reality will be very different from my own; I will see much that is foreign to me and I will learn new things.” Curiosity is an important driver for global networking and cooperation and the cornerstone of any partnership. In particular, it implies an interest in the unique characteristics of the other side.



”

*At the beginning of a project or partnership, the participants often still perceive each other through the lens of stereotypes and fixed ideas. They focus on differences and what seems foreign to them. It's always very exciting to see how strangers gradually turn into friends when they realise how much they have in common after all. Because we are all much more alike as humans than we usually assume.*

**Sören Barge**  
One World Promotor for  
Global Learning, Development  
Policy Association of  
Lower Saxony, Germany

### Differences harbour opportunities

In this context, the term “culture” is often used to describe the common way of life of a certain group of people. For example, it's likely that many of the inhabitants of a village in Lower Saxony, where one of the partner schools is located, celebrate festivals together, eat similar food, belong to the same religion or define the roles of men and women in a similar way. This happens precisely because these people often meet and transmit habits and views directly within their social environment. The latter are the latest stage of a long-standing search for the right way of dealing with the local living conditions (which are also changing) and the circumstances in which these people live. Usually, they are proud of their lifestyles and achievements and are happy to show them to visitors, which is why getting to know them is an important element of any partnership. Intercultural sensitivity, an interest in and great respect for each other are very important: from the outside, some things may not appear to be meaningful or may even look wrong. However, the gaze on the supposed “stranger” always takes place through the lens of one's own standards, which are very likely not relevant in the context of the other's environment. Due to the prevailing development ideology, partners from the Global North in particular run the risk of using this lens to dismiss the lifestyle of partners in the Global South as “backward” while overlooking their achievements or alternative lifestyles. When encountering the contexts in which other people live, it's highly advisable to adopt the role of the learner. The perceived differences between the partners shouldn't be evaluated but should instead be valued as an important source of inspiration for the cooperation. Entering into a partnership along a common path is especially exciting when both sides are different.

## The risks of oversimplification

How we perceive others, and thus our chances of getting to know them in depth, depends strongly on our own attitudes. An automatic human mechanism stands in the way of an unconditional exchange, namely our tendency to form stereotypes. In our highly diverse world, it's difficult for the human mind to find its bearings. Perceiving the unique, complex personality of another person takes time and energy. However, in order to be able to react quickly, the brain divides people into groups that supposedly have the same characteristics and "typical" features: groups such as "the Germans", "the blacks/whites" or "the poor" thus appear easily identifiable. After all, so the assumption goes, they are divided by fixed and mutually exclusive cultures, habits and views. In this automatic process, the term "culture" is extended to a large group of people whom we are no longer able to meet in person, in contrast to our village or circle of acquaintances. In addition, personal experiences gained in a specific environment such as a village in Lower Saxony are quickly and falsely transferred to an entire country. Yet the underlying principle "If you know one of them, you know them all" is wrong, of course: Even in our immediate social environment, there will only be a few things that we have in common, and the same is true all over the world. People are probably much more unique and diverse in their interests and behaviours. Such an understanding of "culture" thus puts the emphasis on differences: For example, if "getting to know another culture" is the main objective of international encounters and holiday trips, this is actually based on a model in which different "cultures" are perceived to be clearly separate from or even incompatible with one another. In this model, we place highly visible differences in eating habits, forms of communication, clothing or music in neatly defined spheres that repel our own spheres, creating a feeling of "us" and "them" in the process.

Other lifestyles are fascinating,  
but people should not be reduced  
to a few characteristics.



## Mental images

Through stereotyping, a few characteristics such as appearance, origin, religion, nationality or ancestry are used to draw conclusions about another person. The danger is obvious: such oversimplification singles out a handful of characteristics that are not shared by all people in the group that we have thus constructed. This turns human beings into rigid caricatures, which strongly influences the way we deal with supposed “others”. For example, project partners are reduced to “black South Africans” and treated on the basis of stereotypes, even though they each clearly have multi-faceted personalities. Behavioural patterns are superficially ascribed to “typical” characteristics, but their true causes remain hidden. In the worst case, these caricatures turn into judgements and prejudices that give rise to resentments. In such cases, people are discriminated against or even persecuted solely on the basis of their skin colour, gender or sexual orientation.

Within global educational partnerships, it’s especially important to reflect on such stereotypes, i.e. the fixed images in our minds. A simple visit to the partner country is not enough. Without proper preparation, we usually only see the things that match our stereotypes and thus confirm them, while other, more complex contexts are either unconsciously overlooked or remain hidden. It’s therefore important to be aware of how stereotypes function: they arise automatically, are therefore an inevitable element of the partnership and must be continuously reflected and discussed.

The “spherical” model of culture quickly becomes obsolete in reality: In everyday life and throughout history, there have always been various shapes and forms that have strongly influenced each other. And even more importantly, our globalised world is full of influences that can become part of an individual’s identity. Separating people by culture is artificial, usually puts the emphasis on a small fragment of reality and at best represents only a snapshot. In partnerships, culture should be viewed as a dynamic fabric that never fully determines an individual’s actions. Cultural differences are socially and historically conditioned and therefore changeable. Participants in global education projects in particular are engaged in tracing their (cultural) identity and questioning it. In practice, this means that common issues shouldn’t be derived from mentally constructed “cultural identities”, which they then risk reproducing, but should be based directly on the diverse experiences of the people involved.

## Finding values and common ground

How we perceive others and how we behave are strongly dependent on each other: intimate and open communication is based on mutual sympathy and respect. Direct verbal exchange is of great importance: Is the other person really interested in me as an individual with specific needs? Does he or she care about my views and wishes? Am I taken seriously? This can only happen when people listen carefully and approach each other in an open-minded and inquisitive manner. At the same time, however, personal boundaries should always be respected. For educational partnerships, it's important not only to talk about concrete measures, but also to try to address more deeply rooted values. The partners will only be able to get to know each other successfully if they discuss and respect their imagined and real differences and search for common values and goals. A partnership founded on these two pillars is more enduring and crisis-proof. The process of getting to know each other is never complete. Sometimes it's possible to get to know someone in just a few minutes and sometimes this happens only bit by bit. Especially in partnerships where both sides live far away from each other, patience and transparency are important building blocks for long-term success.



”

*Have you ever heard of “Ubuntu”?*

*A word from the Nguni languages, spoken mainly in southern Africa, it's often translated simply as “humanity”. But it means much more than that: the full expression in the Xhosa language is “umntu ngumntu ngabantu”. Literally translated, it means that one person becomes a person through another person. Our humanity is not an innate quality but emerges through respectful dialogue and interaction with others.*

*I've been lucky enough to live in Cape Town, at the southern tip of Africa, for over 20 years now, and I have learned a lot from this experience over the years.*

*You, too, can learn so much from international partnerships, even if these encounters are sometimes very brief. Nevertheless, they will provide you with insights that you would never be able to gain through social media, books or films alone.*

**Lutz van Dijk**

*Writer and co-founder of the HOKISA Foundation, South Africa*



**Method**

## The identity flower – making group affiliations visible

**Aim:** The participants reflect on their own identities and group affiliations in order to gain a better understanding of how diverse and complex personalities really are. Participants from several partners organisations are thus able to get to know each other in a variety of ways, thereby avoiding stereotypes and finding common ground.

**Duration:** about 60 min

**Participants:** up to 30

**Materials:** paper, pens

**Procedure:**

**Step 1: (10 min)**

Every participant gets pencils and a sheet of paper and starts by drawing a blossom with large petals. In each petal, he/she writes a facet of his/her identity: What makes you special? Who are you to yourself/to others?

**Step 2: (30 min)**

The participants form pairs, exchange aspects of their identity flowers and try to justify their choice of identity aspects. In a second round of discussions, they reflect on the groups to which they feel they belong. This may be based on the following inputs:



What experiences do you have with belonging to a group (e.g. pleasant or difficult experiences with belonging; voluntary/involuntary belonging; what type of belonging is especially meaningful for you)?



Do you choose to which groups you belong or is membership assigned to you?

What group affiliations do you have in common? Which ones are different?

**Step 3 : (20 min)**

The participants then summarise important findings from the group discussions in line with the aims of the method.



”

***Designing educational partnerships that reflect diversity***

*When designing a global educational project, it is essential to be aware of your own biographically acquired attitudes and attitudes, as well as your own professional and social position, and not to take them for granted. It is about reflecting on power imbalances and attributions and their effects on others, and recognizing and overcoming unintentional discrimination or devaluation. Trust, mutual openness and appreciation must be permitted to grow. This requires space and time, safe learning environments and suitable methods such as intercultural or diversity training. It is exciting to integrate such training and reflection elements into joint project phases with partners.*

*By the way, it can be funny to creatively deal with your own self-evident facts and prejudices. I have had impressive experiences with it in projects and it enables me to quickly and intensively get to know and recognize the project participants in their entire human diversity.*

***Claudia Schanz***

*Head of Section at the Lower Saxony Ministry of Education,  
Diversity Educator, Intercultural Trainer, Germany*



## Conflicts, roles and power structures

At times, it may be difficult to accept the views or behaviour of your partners because they contradict your own convictions: examples are public attitudes towards sexuality, authoritarian forms of parenting, corruption or discriminatory language. These factors can lead to conflicts among the people involved in the project, but they may also be glossed over by unspoken, mutual agreement. Both reactions are harmful for a long-term cooperation based on trust. Often it helps to talk about the reasons for a particular behaviour in order to be able to place it in the local context. This promotes understanding but can also help to clarify the different positions. In the best-case scenario, this will trigger a joint process of reflection that will contribute to greater transparency. This may make it easier to cope with tensions that arise, but not at any price: if the concerns are too serious or if elementary human rights are not being respected, the partnership should be terminated.

Given the unequal living conditions in our world, global education cooperation projects are, by their very nature, likely to bring together people with very different capabilities, privileges and resources. Such differences may be unintentional, but they can quickly translate into power structures: Partners who have money, access to media channels, the freedom to travel, or who are simply white-skinned can use these advantages to influence the partnership in their own interest. As a first step, it's important to become aware of your own position, especially for partners in the Global North. This knowledge can then be used to prevent fixed power relations by enabling all partners to have a say in the decision-making process. The second step should be an open discussion about these different positions and the roles of givers and takers against the background of colonial history (see Chapter 1). Given their special focus, educational partnerships offer a great opportunity to break down such established roles.

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“The Fairy Tale of Equality”  
A booklet on power and solidarity  
in North-South partnerships,  
published by global e.V., including  
a checklist for reflection processes  
[www.glokal.org/publikationen/  
das-maerchen-von-der-augenhoehe/](http://www.glokal.org/publikationen/das-maerchen-von-der-augenhoehe/)

”

***Towards comprehensive partnership approach***

*Picking experts in transformative education outside of their local communities in Global South, and working with them exclusively for the interest of the education systems in the Global North, without taking into consideration the developmental and educational needs and goals of their local communities will not be sustainable.*

*From my experiences, partners in the Global North (individual as well as institutional) often don't consider the economical and developmental needs of their partners (experts and communities) in an appropriate way, when the partnership activities are specialized in "education".*

*Partners from the Global North should follow the so called "comprehensive partnership approach", through which the global partners from North should assume – in close consultation and cooperation - also responsibility for the economical and developmental needs and demands of the experts and their communities in Global South. We need a new philosophy, and principles in this line of international education partnerships, of forming economical sustainable communities, to avoid the accusation which says that educational partnerships are just another form of using the poor for the interest of the rich. Needless to say, as a practice, that will be so fruitful educationally.*

**Maissara Saeed**

*Activist for human rights, Umbaja e.V. Germany/Sudan*



In joint reflections, roles are questioned in the Learn2Change network.



### School partnership

## Intercultural communication as an continuous process for generating questions

St. Germain School, Agona Swedru, Ghana  
and Berufsbildende Schule 1, Gifhorn, Germany

Our partnership started in 2008, when Gilbert Kofi Germain (head of St. Germain School) and Tim Pauls (currently a teacher at the BBS1 vocational school in Gifhorn) met for the first time. At the time, Tim was volunteering at St. Germain School and was inspired by the way it empowered children to claim their rights. Since then, a unique friendship has developed between Gilbert and Tim. By sharing their ideas and perspectives on life, they both experienced first-hand how intercultural communication can help to expand our perception of reality.

Close personal relationships are the key ingredient that allows our partnership to flourish. The willingness of both sides to open up, to adjust their perspectives and to be mindful not to judge the other at first glance is of crucial importance. Encouraging in-depth communication is a cornerstone of growth – on a personal as well as on a partnership level. To a certain extent, we achieve the latter

through a common blog and voice messages, but personal encounters have the greatest potential to further deepen this relationship.

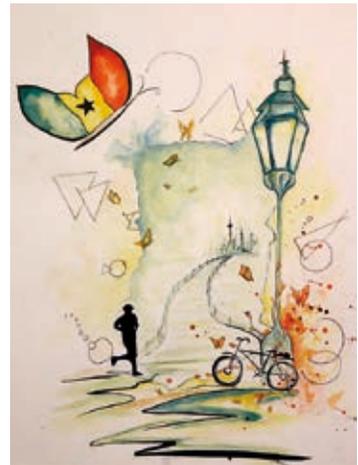
Learning takes place through a blend of different approaches, notably by reflecting on perspectives and experiences in a process of intercultural group communication where conflicts are embraced instead of being suppressed. In order to dig deeper, it is important to provide a space for private, interpersonal conversations. Constant questioning of one's own perspectives proved to be a helpful attitude; this also means that we don't attempt to find final answers in intercultural communication, but to perceive it as a continuous process of generating questions – and thus to retain the mental flexibility that prevents us from becoming prisoners of ingrained patterns and habits.

Learning is also facilitated by exposures to the many ways in which our two worlds are interconnected: scratching away the surface of culture allows us to become aware of our common humanity. However, this also implies a need to challenge the patterns of our own culture.

Motivated by these experiences, Gilbert and Tim wanted to open up opportunities for others to share their visions and ideas in a similar way. As a first step, students from St. Germain recorded video messages in which they provided insights into their everyday life, including both its darker and its lighter aspects. These videos led to a concept for global learning that helps to encourage students to become aware of existing prejudices and to critically reconsider them. This has given rise to an ongoing exchange between the students, which culminated in the first "real" encounters in 2018.

In the future, we aim to take the next step on this path by not only reflecting on the injustices in our societies but by addressing them through common action.

[www.ghanagermanypartnership.wordpress.com](http://www.ghanagermanypartnership.wordpress.com)



Our common path,  
drawn by Quynh Bui Ghan



Our encounter in Ghana 2018

## 2.3 Making a common plan

Von Sören Barge

*How can the initial plans for a project be effectively implemented?*

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At its core, a global education project or partnership is about implementing specific projects in order to practice joint learning through dialogue and cooperation. In very practical terms, these activities need to be planned, implemented and evaluated. Proven project management methods help to maintain an overview and to trigger the planned effects among the participants and within the targeted structures. This approach makes the project manageable and tends to make the various steps of the cooperation more concrete. That being said, global educational cooperation is characterised by a search for experiences, questions and diverse answers, and by experimenting with possibilities and perspectives. In this context, “learning” refers to a methodologically diverse, open-ended and self-directed process without any predetermined direction or rights or wrongs. This does not make project planning any easier: If learning is pursued in this way, it will give rise to new paths, inputs and ideas that need to be discussed and organised. For the partners involved, finding the right balance between openness and specific project plans is a great challenge that they need to address on a continuous basis. The best way to do this is through shared responsibility for ongoing processes: If only one side is responsible for a large part of the planning, it may lose sight of the other side’s need for openness and personal responsibility. On the other hand, insufficient structuring on one side can also lead to frustration on the other. Creating a common framework that leaves room for individual commitment has proven to be the best way forward. It also makes sense to reach a clear agreement on the partners’ respective responsibilities, which they can then implement as independently as possible, for example by involving the participants themselves. You should therefore plan enough time for joint considerations and agreements, ideally in joint workshops, before the start of the actual project. This preparatory work can also result in a basic “partnership agreement”. The partners can use this official document to assure each other that they want to work together in the future. It may also contain some pointers for the content of the project (e.g. focus on the SDGs or a specific topic) or, if the content has already been determined, the measures to be taken (meetings, creation of a book or website, etc.). Ideally, the agreement should also lay down the joint responsibilities for planning, organisation, financing, public relations work, etc. These provisions notwithstanding, you should always be open to ad hoc modifications, as this is the only way a lively partnership can develop.

## Practical communication methods

When (educational) cooperation takes place over long distances, ensuring reliable and respectful communication is especially important. Misunderstandings may arise in both written and oral communication, for example if one side is used to being direct and concise, but the style of the other side is more cordial and comprehensive. For this reason, it should always be possible to ask questions in the interest of promoting mutual understanding. Consequently, before embarking on any extensive planning, it's important to agree on the appropriate methods of communication: Partners on both sides should feel confident that they can send information via different channels and will receive answers in return. One or two central, common communication channels should be selected, to avoid individual bits of information from being scattered across different channels, which may cause confusion. This could take the form of phone calls, emails, letters, messenger services, social networks or the use of special exchange platforms on the internet. Another factor to consider is the time zone: in the event of a substantial time difference, (video) phone calls have to be properly planned, which can be an important criterion for choosing a partner country, especially for schools with fixed teaching times. Digitalisation, in particular, offers new opportunities for communication, but these first need to be brought to life. Moreover, it should also be considered that some parts of the world lack a fast and cheap internet connection, especially for larger volumes of data or video conferencing. Ideally, one at each end should be nominated who is responsible for managing the communication, as this reduces the risk of misunderstandings. These individuals also need to make sure that everyone involved in the partnership can actively participate in the communication. However, if a decision urgently needs to be made but there is no response from the partners after a long period of time, it should also be possible for only one side to make that decision.

Joint brainstorming sessions and discussions help to find initial ideas and ways to implement them.



## Working on common issues

The world is full of challenges, but also of wonderful things that affect all of our lives. Many people on our globalised planet are interconnected in various ways: Through the use of natural resources, production chains and consumer habits, migration, historical developments and traditions of thought, music and art, religion, war and peace, professional opportunities, digital media, politics and social movements, etc.

These linkages raise many questions that can be tackled through mutual exchange, experiences and processing. A common issue or a theme gives the project a sense of direction and thus a large part of its meaning. It creates a connection between the partners beyond the mere desire to get to know each other and thereby creates a foundation for joint work. Perhaps the topic was already the reason why you chose a specific partner, but if not, you should look for one together with your new partners by asking yourselves the following question: What issues are currently relevant for both sides in their work or everyday life? Are both partners able to contribute their specific perspectives and knowledge in the search for answers? On which topic would a comparison of the different approaches be interesting for both sides? What is the best way to promote joint activities and identify a common goal?



”

*Education must be rethought. And we must ask the question ‘why education’ before continuing with ‘how’ and ‘what’. We will find many of the answers in the guiding principles and values of Global Citizenship Education and other transformative approaches.*

*Global Citizenship Education is larger than the needs of individual students or the needs of individual schools. It’s larger than the educational needs of our country. Global Citizenship Education provides the competencies students around the world require in order to take the next step towards actively participating in their personal world, however small or large that may be.*

*For some, the first step is access to quality education and the chance to work on core competencies such as reading and writing. For others the next step is the development of transformative competencies such as the ability to take responsibility for themselves and others around them. Although not at all a linear process, the culmination of Global Citizenship Education can be understood as the development of the personal motivation and sense of confidence required to take the actions necessary towards future well-being, towards a more just and peaceful world.*

**Nick Krichevsky**

*Teacher at the Robert-Bosch-Gesamtschule Hildesheim, Germany*

## Planning the activities

It should be possible to translate the selected issue into a wide range of activities. In the context of projects, these are often referred to as measures, given that they contribute to the achievement of the project objectives. How then can the issue be addressed? This also requires good ideas. For example, a first step could be to analyse the local situation: What are the objects, places, people and stories connected to the issue? The project partners could present these to each other via digital media channels and then look for interesting practical projects together. To this end, it is important to use methods that put the perspectives and opinions of the project partners on an equal footing. And this is where openness comes into play: The partners should have some leeway in how they implement the project while agreeing on a number of fixed rules: When should the results be available (e.g. at the end of the school year)? What is the desired format (e.g. a play)? How will the results be exchanged (e.g. via a video streaming service)? Joint planning and openness are just as important for the activities that take place in the framework of an encounter: the hosts shouldn't decide on the programme alone but should consult with the guests beforehand about the types of excursions, practical work or discussion groups that best suited to address the issue at hand. In many cases, it helps to create a joint product during or after an encounter during which everyone can get involved in their own way. Additional examples can be found in the project presentations and in Chapter 3.1. In principle, a nascent partnership should start with small and manageable activities that may not even require any comprehensive planning. Methods such as the joint work plan shown on the next page can then be used later, when the arrangements become more complicated.



Global learning methods convey global relationships and can also be used well during visits.

## Using existing skills

Building a partnership involves many different tasks, which ideally should be shouldered together. Chapter 3 contains a lot of practical information on this topic. All of this requires work and commitment. To get a better idea of what lies ahead, it's worthwhile to make a list of all tasks, so that all parties involved know what to expect. Importantly, not everyone has to work on all aspects of the projects. Think about the existing experiences, knowledge, skills and competencies together with your partners. People often have different skills and knowledge that can be very useful for the implementation of an international education project or the establishment of an education partnership. This includes, for example, knowledge of global contexts, spontaneity and creative ideas, foreign language skills, experience in facilitating dialogue and applying educational methods, social skills in terms of motivation, social intelligence and dispute resolution, organisational skills, presentation skills, experience with public relations, the use of digital tools, the internet and social media, or a love of numbers and budgeting.

connect to change



*Education is one of the pillars for the socio-economic development of peoples and nations, but it is also a means by which a better life may be peacefully built for all. With today's globalization, education is no longer a specific question limited to each country isolated in its own corner, with the result that the effects of a good educational system remain limited to that country alone. Learning among communities and the exchange of experiences and lessons learned from exposure to other systems and models applied everywhere would help to accelerate and improve education throughout the world, and to realize sustainable development goals. And in order to prevent the fragmentation of efforts undertaken, it is essential to build and strengthen international education partnerships, bringing to light the specific characteristics of different regions and focusing these on the good that is to be encountered in people.*

*Let us adopt this means of weaving together the atoms of education from systems around the world, so that we may successfully draw forth that "philosopher's stone" that will succeed in creating much needed change.*

**Hamza Ghedamsi**

Founder of Modèle de L'Union Africaine, Tunisia



## Method

# Work plan (online)

**Aim:** When planning joint activities, it's helpful to have an overview of the necessary steps. These should be collected in a plan that is accessible to everyone and that contains a certain number of questions for each step or activity.

**Duration:** depends on the scope of the project

**Participants:** up to 15

**Materials:** For workshops: a sheet of paper (as large as possible), pens  
 Online: a document on a website that is accessible to all partners with the technology at their disposal, possibly tools and video conferencing technology

**Procedure:** Create a table with columns that relate to one question at a time. Then collect the tasks in the rows below. This table can be compiled during a joint in-person workshop, but it's also possible to create it using online tools (e.g. [www.miro.com](http://www.miro.com) or [www.stormboard.com](http://www.stormboard.com)) so that the participants can then fill it in together during a video conference or one by one afterwards. You can then use this plan to check how far the implementation has progressed.



### WHAT needs to be done?

Here you should identify the specific activities or smaller tasks that need to be organised or completed.

### WHY does it need to be done?

Here you should specify the intended objectives or effects of the activity. You can later use this information to check whether the activity was useful.

### HOW should it be done?

Here you can describe the implementation in more detail, which helps to make sure that a task properly carried out.

### WHEN (or by when) does it need to be done?

Here you should indicate the deadline for completing the task. This is especially useful for planning subsequent activities.

### WHO is going to do it?

Here you should specify the people responsible for the respective tasks.

### Example:

WHAT	WHY	HOW	WHEN	WHO
Arrange funding for a video shoot	We need money to buy a camera	Apply for funding	By the end of July	Michael
Organise visas for the trip to Germany	We cannot enter without a visa	Contact the German embassy, collect all the necessary documents	By the end of October	Carlos





The school garden in Oldenburg



### School partnership

## Partnership creates power – jointly developing common themes

Helene-Lange-Schule, Oldenburg, Germany;  
Sanctor High School and Willow Academy, Port Elizabeth, South Africa

The purpose of our partnership is to establish common goals, be it in our communities or schools, which allows for an exchange of information, techniques and achievements. Every three years, we select a new topic in order to create awareness and inspire not only the learners but the broader community.

After the 2015-2017 project cycle, which focused on renewable energy and recycling, we were looking for a new theme. In 2018, teachers from Sanctor High School and Willow Academy in South Africa attended a teachers' exchange at the Helene-Lange-Schule in Germany. In a three-day, full-time workshop led by a professional moderator, they chose a new theme together with learners from the Helene-Lange-Schule. On their return to South Africa, learners from Sanctor High School and Willow Academy attended a similar workshop in Port Elizabeth.

In 2019, after a long process of discussion and reflection, which included all participants equally, we decided to set up school gardens at the participating schools. In addition, the group from the Helene-Lange-Schule also wanted to produce DIY seed packages to encourage people to grow their own vegetables. Therefore, at a meeting in Oldenburg in March 2019, German and South African learners planted a school garden with a large quantity of tomatoes and chillies. At the end of the summer, we successfully harvested the seeds for the seed packages and for the next planting season.

The main component of our partnership is to share our experiences with each other, which also includes taking our learners abroad. People who are in charge of international exchange programmes inevitably have to confront the students' lack of knowledge about the partner country. This may cause some uncertainty, as even the most open-minded individuals are subject to preconceptions and cultural misunderstandings.

To make the exchange a success, it is absolutely necessary to address such tensions from the very beginning of the project by means of proper communication. During the exchange, we discussed almost every aspect right away, a form of permanent evaluation that was only possible because we know each other very well by now. In addition, we were also able to organise several team-building workshops.

To encourage the students to reflect on their experiences, we asked them to write reports about the activities and events during their exchange, which were then compiled into beautiful booklets. However, the most important venue for evaluating the exchange was again the full-day workshop. In both groups, the professional team trainer helped the students to realise what they had learned during the previous three weeks. Using a range of methods, the trainer encouraged the students to revisit and compare their experiences, including their fears and doubts, and to celebrate what they had achieved in the previous weeks.

In 2018, in order to give students the opportunity to stay involved with the project in the future, teachers from the Helene-Lange-Schule and former project participants founded a non-profit organisation called "Partnerschaft schafft Energie – partnership creates power e.V." The NGO handles the financial planning of the exchange programme as well as fundraising and public relations activities. The board of the NGO is responsible for the implementation of the current exchange project and keeps the members informed of all ongoing initiatives and how they can best be supported.

[www.willowacademy.co.za/](http://www.willowacademy.co.za/)  
[www.t1p.de/partnerschaft-schafft-energie](http://www.t1p.de/partnerschaft-schafft-energie)  
[www.sanctorhigh.co.za](http://www.sanctorhigh.co.za)



South African guests in Germany 2019



”

### ***I AM AN AFRICAN CHILD***

*I am born and raised on African soil  
I am groomed by the challenges of life  
My creative capabilities and my freedom of expression were  
held back against my will by the apartheid system  
I fought for my freedom with a stone  
While the soldier held a gun against me  
I received my democracy because I AM AFRICAN*

*My blood is green, yellow, orange, red .....*  
*I see no colour in people  
I believe in one race  
THE HUMAN RACE*

*I am inspired by Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela  
I believe in SOLIDARITY  
I believe in HARMONY  
I believe..... no boundaries, no border gates, no political system  
will STOP ME  
I laughed, cried, smiled, hated, loved  
But I will never turn back  
I am still fighting for ONE WORLD  
BECAUSE.....  
I AM.....an AFRICAN CHILD*

***Novelletta Blignaut, Teacher at Sancto High School, South Africa  
Wesley Blignaut, Teacher at Willow Academy, South Africa  
Nomatlou Mahlangu, Founder of the Golden Youth Club; member of  
Peer Leader International, South Africa***



# 3 ON YOUR MARKS, GET SET, GO!

## Specific tips for working together

Once partners from different countries have found each other and have defined the content and goals of their cooperation, the foundation stone has been laid and the actual work can begin. Initially, this can give rise to many questions. But even in already existing education partnerships and projects it makes sense to take stock, to bring in new ideas and to consider how the work could be changed, improved or simplified. The aim of this chapter is to provide answers to practical questions for both newcomers and more experienced users. It thus contains specific tips and information. It starts with a discussion of the kinds of activities that can be implemented together, followed by an explanation of how a partnership or project can be structurally embedded in an organisation and how learners can be involved in shaping it. The chapter also provides practical information on how to raise public awareness, secure funding and make the formal travel arrangements for an exchange visit. Finally, it shows how a partnership or project can become a model for sustainable action, how to comply with data protection and personal rights and where to turn for advice and support.



## 3.1 Organising activities

By Sarah Laustroer

### *What kinds of measures should be implemented together?*



*International education partnerships and projects thrive as a result of the specific activities that they pursue. Joint activities and experiences intensify the contact among the partners and strengthen the connection between them. This enables both sides to present themselves and to share their views, which allows for a more enriching experience. When choosing the type of activity, there are virtually no limits to the imagination.*

**Sarah Laustroer**  
Educational Assistant and  
Project Coordinator, Association  
of Lower Saxony Education  
Initiatives (VNB), Germany

The term “measures” comes from the language used in project funding applications. It refers to the activities that are required to achieve a predefined objective. Such measures should be thought of as a larger unit in which several activities can be combined. For example, the measure “exchange visit” may include a preparatory visit or a follow-up meeting, as well as other preparatory activities (e.g. a video conference) and the activities that take place during the visit itself.

Measures are the centrepiece of any education partnership or project and bring it to life. Different types of measures are possible, and education partnerships and projects vary greatly in their structure and activities. A look at the examples of education partnerships and projects contained in this handbook alone reveals the wide range of possible options. To make these options more manageable, we have divided the most common types of measures into the following broad categories:

- Exchanges via different media, i.e. letters, video messages, live chats or similar methods;
- Exchange visits, where one partner group visits the other in their country;
- Developing a joint product, such as a book, a piece of music, a film or a play, or implementing a project together;
- Political actions.

This chapter does not include fundraising activities such as charity runs as a category of their own. They can act as an additional means of raising money for the implementation of other activities (see Chapter 3.5 for more information). Taken alone, however, they do not really constitute a measure in the sense of an education partnership. An education partnership is about learning together and engaging and working with each other on an equal footing, in order to enable open-ended learning on both sides. If a partnership is about collecting money in one country in order to provide financial support for the partners in the other country, it is more appropriate to speak of “sponsorship” rather than “partnership”. In this case, a clear hierarchy of givers and takers will be established. Charitable partnerships or sponsorships are therefore not considered in this handbook.

The categories mentioned above offer only a first indication of the possibilities and should therefore be seen as complementary rather than rigid. For more inspiration on how to shape your own partnership, it is worth consulting the project ideas contained in this handbook, to have a look at what others are doing and to use your own imagination.

## Exchanges through different media

In the past, students used to be pen pals, but today, thanks to digital media, the possibilities for exchanging information over great distances have proliferated. The basic idea, however, is still the same. An actual encounter is not always necessary and feasible, for example because the participants are too young, or the organisation of a trip would be too complex and expensive. Nevertheless, there are other options for arranging face-to-face exchanges even in the face of physical distance. The options range from low-threshold to ambitious, and from a one-time interaction to a long-term exchange.

Students can still engage with each other as pen pals, but they will probably do so by email rather than by post. Email offers the advantage of reaching the recipient much more quickly than a traditional letter. Such exchanges can also be supplemented by sharing photos and video messages or by interactive presentations or guided tours, for example through an Augmented Reality tour<sup>1</sup> of the school garden, if the relevant technical knowledge is available. This involves superimposing texts, graphics and videos over a photo, thereby allowing users to explore the various elements and to get a better idea of the image. All these are examples of long-term exchanges that can take place without any thematic focus. Often, however, setting a topic can simplify the communication.

There is also the possibility of organising a direct exchange in the form of a live chat. In this case, the participants meet online at a specified time using a video conferencing platform, for example via Skype, Zoom, Jitsi or BigBlueButton. The discussion should be carefully prepared and moderated so that no long and uncomfortable pauses occur in which nobody knows what to say or ask and to prevent people from talking over each other, which makes it difficult for the other side to follow what is going on. Live chats can either take the form of an exchange between two groups or of an interview where one group interviews one person from another country. They can be organised as part of a longer-term exchange or simply as a one-off experience. In any case, organisers need to take into account the time differences between the two countries.

Another option are online seminars, in which small groups take turns to organise sessions for all participants.

1) Augmented Reality: The term “augmented reality” refers to an expansion of visual perception.

The “Chat der Welten (“Chat of Worlds”) programme organises live chats between schools or groups in Germany and people from other countries.

[www.t1p.de/chat-der-welten](http://www.t1p.de/chat-der-welten)  
(website in German)

As the coordinator of the Learn2Change network, VNB can help you in finding partners for international dialogue and the organisation of live chats.

[www.t1p.de/L2C-Skype-Interviews-English](http://www.t1p.de/L2C-Skype-Interviews-English)



The pupils from the Wingster Wald primary school



The pupils from the FD Primary School in Ahmedabad

### International primary education project

## Feliz Birth Tag – My Zero-Waste Birthday in the World of Tomorrow

Schule am Wingster Wald, Wingst, Germany; FD Primary School, Ahmedabad, India; and Escuela Manuel Bartolomé Cossío, Mexico City, Mexico

In 2017 the Schule am Wingster Wald, an elementary school from Germany, decided to participate in the “One World for All” school competition on development policy initiated by the German President. Two members of ESD Expert Net, a network of experts in the field of Education for Sustainable Development from Germany, India, Mexico and South Africa, helped to connect the Schule am Wingster Wald with two schools in Ahmedabad, India, and Mexico City, Mexico, that were interested in working together.

The three facilitators – Sabine Cordes, principal of the “Schule am Wingster Wald” in Germany, Rajeswari Gorana, a member of the ESD Expert Net from India, and Wendy Morel, a member of the ESD Expert Net from Mexico – jointly developed the project and took all the relevant decisions together. They discussed and refined the different milestones on a weekly basis, from the selection of topics to the planning of the next steps. Furthermore, they created a common WhatsApp group to quickly reach agreements and answer any questions that arose.

**The project “Feliz Birth Tag” was born from the ideas and criteria that the facilitators developed and included the following elements:**

- Enabling the pupils from the different countries to get to know each other on an equal footing;
- Identifying global commonalities and discussing them;
- Facilitating the participation of all pupils within a framework of inclusive education;
- Pursuing a topic of global learning that is equally relevant for everyone involved and which promotes opportunities for acting accordingly worldwide.

**The implementation of the project proceeded as follows:**

- The facilitators established a common framework of sessions and questions and translated them for the pupils. This was then communicated and developed via Skype conferences, email and WhatsApp.

- The activities carried out and the questions answered by each group were shared via the WhatsApp group. All groups also created short films, which were translated from English into German, Gujarati and Spanish, respectively, to ensure better comprehension on the part of the pupils. The pupils shared videos in which they sang typical birthdays songs, discussed cooking recipes they normally use and presented alternative decorations for a sustainable birthday celebration.

- Given the children’s expectation to see what the others shared and their desire to show this content to their parents and friends, Wendy Morel developed an interactive presentation with the technical support of Giovanni Fonseca, another ESD Expert Net member (see [www.t1p.de/felizbirthtag](http://www.t1p.de/felizbirthtag)).

- As part of the project, a Skype conference was organised between the class in Germany and the class in India (unfortunately, this was not possible with the Mexican class due to the different time zones.) This interaction presented a number of challenges, including the need for continuous translation and the poor sound quality. Nevertheless, this format enabled the pupils to communicate directly with each other, to see the other children and to have a conversation in real time.

Such international partnerships based on virtual exchanges enable elementary school pupils to get to know children from other countries – their peers from around the world – without the necessity of travel. A crucial component of this project was the joint focus on the UN’s SDGs. Working on topics such as how to avoid garbage and how willing people on different continents are to take responsibility for the world can empower even elementary-school learners to take action.

[www.t1p.de/esd-expert-net](http://www.t1p.de/esd-expert-net)  
[www.t1p.de/grundschule-wingst](http://www.t1p.de/grundschule-wingst)  
[www.t1p.de/manuelbartolome](http://www.t1p.de/manuelbartolome)



”

*Travelling to a foreign country and meeting new people is a unique and often overwhelming experience – one that everyone should have the chance to experience at least once. While it is easy to get excited about the culture and environment, what makes this experience truly special are the local people. I've learned a lot on this journey. On the one hand that we as human beings are all basically the same, and on the other hand that we can achieve incredible things if we stick together. We need to keep working to improve ourselves and the world and see to it that there are more and more encounters and exchanges between people and countries. After many such experiences, my view of the world has changed completely. Now I'm convinced that a world without racism and wars is possible.*

**Marie Finiefs**

*Student of the Tilman-Riemenschneider-Gymnasium in Osterode am Harz, Germany*

## Exchange visits

Exchange visits are a popular and widely used measure, especially in the case of long-term partnerships. They provide a great opportunity to see how the partners live, to get to know each other personally and to strengthen the relationship through shared experiences. It is ideal if such encounters are organised as exchange trips in both directions, so that both sides have the opportunity to visit their partners; otherwise, there is a risk that the relationship will be imbalanced, and that one side will dominate in terms of knowledge or experience.

Exchange visits require sound organisational and educational support, both during the trip itself and during the preparation and follow-up work. Ideally, the preparation should consist of a mixture of organisational information, preparatory work on the topic of the trip/exchange (where applicable), efforts to empower the group and the participants, and intercultural or Global Learning activities. If participants are travelling to a country outside their own continent for the first time, such trips are often accompanied by many questions and uncertainties – both on their part and that of their parents/legal guardians. Consequently, the organisers should provide detailed information about the trip, the necessary documents, safety instructions, the programme, and food and accommodation. It is equally important to prepare the participants for new and unforeseen experiences. Such trips often don't go exactly according to plan and participants are frequently confronted with new experiences in the partner country. Openness and trust (in oneself, the chaperones and the group) can help the participants to cope with these experiences. In addition, stereotypes and prejudices should be identified before the trip in order to open the participants' eyes to new things and experiences. Otherwise, the participants may selectively interpret their impressions in such a way that existing stereotypes become reinforced and consolidated.

During the exchange visit, the participants should know who to turn to in case of questions or issues. It is also a good idea to leave some space for reflection. It may be beneficial for the participants to meet once a day in their "country group" to exchange views in their mother tongue about how they are doing and what they find unsettling, annoying, surprising or gratifying. This continuous interaction and reflection on what they have experienced makes it easier for the participants to deal with new and unfamiliar experiences and prevents them from shutting themselves off or rebelling due to excessive demands and uncertainty.

Sometime after the exchange visit, a follow-up should take place. In addition to reviewing or summarising the results, the participants should also have the opportunity to reflect on what they have experienced, share their personal thoughts and review their earlier stereotypes. If it goes hand in hand with proper preparation and follow-up work, an exchange visit offers great opportunities for intercultural learning.

Taking part in such an exchange trip is often an attractive prospect, but there are usually only a limited number of places available. If more teenagers/young adults want to take part than there are places available, a selection must be made, which is often not so easy. What is important is that the selection is transparent, focused on diversity and as fair as possible, using specified, justifiable criteria.



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*My family wanted me to follow the same trend as my sisters and marry at an early age and someone of their choice to reduce their responsibilities. For weeks, I was in a dilemma, torn between listening to their opinions about my own life and making a bold decision to focus on achieving my dreams – until I had the opportunity to participate in the school exchange programme. When I returned, I realised that I’d grown a lot, especially thanks to my host sister, and that my learning ability has been enhanced as well.*

*The programme gave me exposure, built up my confidence and enabled me to stand up for my rights in front of my family. Before the programme, I couldn’t even speak up and express myself even when I was right. But now, I can boldly share useful ideas concerning my rights, most importantly in the area of education. I’m now able to organise educational programmes, study clubs and motivational activities to help young people.*

*I’m now proudly independent and am currently studying fashion design as my profession, since I don’t want to depend on men for a living. I believe I can do it, since even a thousand miles begin with a single step. I’m very grateful.*

**Gloria Germain Afari**

*Former student at the St. Germain School, Ghana*



Students of the Willow Academy in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, and the Helene-Lange-Schule in Oldenburg, Germany, on an excursion to the Wadden Sea (Germany)



*For us, global cooperation is about a change of perspective. Basically, everyone is thinking inside their own boxes. At least that was the case for us before we traveled out of our comfort zones into the world and developed projects together with young people from other countries. Through our experiences with new cultures, interesting people and countries that were initially foreign to us, we've learned to think globally. More young people should have the opportunity to experience this, in order to facilitate multifaceted thinking and acting.*

**Katja Peper und Malte Frederichs**  
Peer Leader International,  
Germany

## Developing and implementing joint activities

It can be very motivating for all participants if they develop or do something together with their partners. There are numerous ways to do this. For example, the results of a project can be presented by means of a newspaper, a blog or a book, or the participants can create a sculpture together. And they can also produce a joint play, a piece of music or even a film. While some activities can be planned and realised through digital exchanges, others definitely require a physical encounter. Although it is possible to create a virtual play, it is certainly more interesting for the participants if they can rehearse and/or perform it together.

It is also possible for the groups involved in the partnership to each develop their own product. For example, if both partners develop a school garden at the same time, the participants can exchange ideas about the process and report on what is happening in their respective garden. It is not always necessary to work together on the same project – the participants can also develop a strong bond and become very interested if they know that a group in another country is working on a similar project.

When working on a common product, it is important to make sure that the role of leader does not always fall to the same people. It is more beneficial and productive in the long term if different people from different countries can contribute their skills and lead the groups. This requires a certain degree of openness. Maybe there are people on both side who have experience in staging a play, for example, but the approaches are very different. This awareness helps the participants to recognise that there is not only one “right” approach, but that there are many different ones, and the question is whether these can be brought together in a single project or whether they should be applied to different projects. In addition, care should be taken both in the allocation of leadership tasks and in the distribution of tasks among the participants to ensure that roles are not assigned based on stereotypical beliefs. Sometimes stereotypes may turn out to be true, in which case this can be reflected in the distribution of tasks, provided that everyone is comfortable with it, but sometimes they prove false, or it can be exciting to consciously dismantle them.

## Political action

International education partnerships and projects can serve as an experimental space for (socio)political action. They can empower the participants to take up their own political positions while getting to know and trying out forms of action that allow them to make their voices heard. A low-threshold option is to present political statements to the outside world as part of public relations work, for example on a website, in a newspaper or in discussions with outsiders. A “product” developed together with the partners, such as a theatre or music piece, can have a political message, which may also develop in the course of the project. However, it is also possible to plan specific political actions from the outset and to carry them out together with all the partners – either within the framework of exchange visits or separately in the respective partner countries. Such actions could take the form of a flash mob, an organised demonstration, a campaign to collect signatures, (invisible) street theatre or similar activities.

The advantage of joint political action is that an international group usually receives a great deal of attention. Such an “international presence” makes it easier to reach not only the general public, but also politicians. It is important, however, not to instrumentalise the international guests for political actions that are not shared by the other side. In this context, there should be room for controversial political discussions without indoctrinating the participants.

When carrying out political actions, it is also essential to be familiar with the legal regulations governing different forms of protest and the local conditions so as not to put the participants at risk. The legal provisions governing public expressions of opinion and political action differ from country to country. For this reason, you should discuss with your partners what types of activities can be carried out in the respective country in a manner that is both legally and socially safe. If participants from another country get into trouble with the police or the law and their behaviour is considered a criminal offence, this can mean, among other things, that they will have difficulties applying for a visa in the future.



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*The possibility of building bridges between institutions in various territories around the globe to achieve common objectives that impact people’s lives and environments has been an extraordinary experience. The political pressure exercised by a letter signed by activists from all over the world or the intentionality of a prayer can make a difference for the re-education of humanity.*

**Jorge Alejandro Huichalaf Díaz**  
Teacher at the Koyam Primary School and President of the Mapuche Credit Union “Küme mogen”, Wallmapu (territory of the Mapuche in Chile and Argentina)



Table theatre adaptation of the German children's book "Frederick"



### (Vocational) school partnership

## A dream comes true

Herman-Nohl-Schule vocational school in Hildesheim, Germany and the Montessori Teacher Training Center in Moshi, Tanzania

Once upon a time there were 10 students and two teachers who travelled to a distant land to find new friends and to learn with and from them.

What at first may sound like a fairy tale has become a reality for vocational students, teachers and school administrators from Hildesheim in Germany and Moshi in Tanzania. In 2019, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the partnership between the Herman-Nohl-Schule, Germany, which focuses on vocational education in healthcare and the social sector, and the Montessori Teacher Training Center in. Despite initial doubts as to whether there were many similarities between Germany and Tanzania, it soon became clear that early childhood and intercultural education are of great importance in both countries. Through work on joint projects, the participants learn to adopt a one-world mindset, to learn with and from each other and to become critical of racism.

During a visit of students and teachers from Hildesheim to Tanzania and a visit of students from Moshi to Germany the follo-

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*The exchange programmes that we have so far organised between students and teachers from both sides have enriched us pedagogically, socially, culturally and intellectually. In fact, the students' attitudes and ways of thinking have changed completely, which has led to better and stronger relationships. We would like to continue this partnership scheme and will continuously aim to find ways and means to strengthen it. The programme has been an enriching experience for our students in many ways, giving them the opportunity to travel, to meet other people and to discover new places.*

**Christina Nakey**

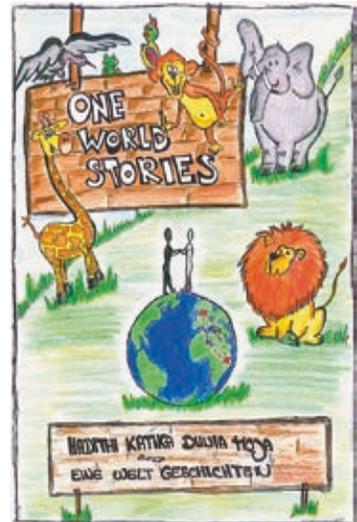
*Head of the Montessori Teacher Training Center in Moshi, Tanzania*

wing year, the participants worked on common values such as friendship, solidarity and diversity using various European and Tanzanian children's books. The participants continued to develop these common values through cultural forms of expression such as (table) theatre and music for kindergarten and school children, which they then presented in both countries. In response, the Tanzanian students wrote down stories that are traditionally passed down orally from generation to generation. In addition, the groups also jointly created their own stories incorporating both Tanzanian and German influences. These stories were then translated into English (as the common language), as well as into Kiswahili and German, and the children illustrated them with their own drawings. The result is a trilingual children's book entitled "One World Stories – Hadithi Katika Dunia Moja – Eine Welt Geschichten", which has even been published.

During four additional encounters, the participants worked on topics such as children's games from both countries, diversity and inclusion and early childhood environmental education, including the development of games and toys. During the last encounter in Germany in 2019, students from Moshi and Hildesheim were divided into project groups and worked on the topic "Water is a human right!" for two weeks. Among other things, this resulted in a show featuring the song "Water Water", which they presented together at the end of One World Week in Hildesheim.\*

As a result of the many years of cooperation based on trust and the various projects that have been developed, the partnership has succeeded at promoting global learning – both in teacher training and in early childhood education – and laid the foundation for a multicultural and inclusive society.

[www.herman-nohl-schule.de/](http://www.herman-nohl-schule.de/)  
[www.montessori-tanzania.ch/](http://www.montessori-tanzania.ch/)



The book can be downloaded:  
[www.t1p.de/one-world-stories](http://www.t1p.de/one-world-stories)

\*The video is available on YouTube:  
[www.t1p.de/water-waterr](http://www.t1p.de/water-waterr)

## 3.2 Embedding projects in a structural manner

By Claudia Dierkes-Hartwig

*How can global education projects be successfully embedded in the entire ecosystem of the implementing organisations?*



*Embedding Education for Sustainable Development in school education in a structural manner, with special consideration for a global perspective, is the aim of the nationwide coordination programme, which is being implemented as part of the education activities of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. In order to achieve this goal, I have followed the project “Connect for Change” from the perspective of the Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs.*

**Claudia Dierkes-Hartwig**  
Coordinator for Global Learning,  
Lower Saxony Ministry of  
Education and Cultural Affairs,  
Germany

The structures of the organisations implementing international education partnerships and projects are as varied as the formats, themes, objectives and target groups of their activities. Some are small non-governmental organisations whose sole purpose is to implement (education) partnerships, which often work on a voluntary basis. Others are larger environmental, development and human rights organisations or sports clubs, where partnership work is one of many activities. Municipalities, extracurricular educational institutions and church groups also frequently work with international partners. And of course, there are many schools that undertake educational projects with schools in other countries.

Different actors often work together. In many cases, this happens within the framework of school partnerships in which non-governmental organisations are also involved in order to establish contacts with partner organisations in other countries and to provide content and educational support. Some partnerships collaborate closely with the local environment, including municipalities, cultural institutions, local businesses, etc., making it possible to build up a diverse network of actors from both the Global North and the Global South.

The idea of looking at the world through different eyes, thinking globally, learning together and making a difference needs to be embedded in the structures of an organisation in such a way that all those involved can take part (whole-institution approach/whole-school approach). In addition, it is also important to actively involve the environment of the respective educational institution, in fields such as “teaching and learning environments”, “continuing education and organisation”, “facilities and campus” and “partners and cooperation” (whole system approach). Taking schools as an example, the following section shows how the integration into local structures and environments can look like. Many of these statements apply equally to associations, municipalities and church groups.

### Turning your project into a project supported by the entire school

The initiative to establish an international education partnership or project often comes from a single committed person within a school community. It is frequently the result of personal contacts with people in other countries or of experience with cooperation in extracurricular projects. In order to implement an international project in a school environment, it is necessary to

spark the enthusiasm of a group of interested people who will take responsibility for the project by acting as a steering group. From the very beginning, students, teachers, staff, guardians and extra-curricular partners should be involved.

### The support of the school's management is indispensable

Getting the school management on board is vital for the success of an international education partnership or project. This will ensure the necessary time and space for implementation, proper communication within the school community, coordinated agreements on the objectives (also with extra-curricular partners), further training and networking of teachers and students as well as quality assurance. This is based on an understanding of schools as educational or organisational units of action in which everyone is actively involved in a systematic process of communication where coordinated measures are taken. In addition, the school management is responsible for coordinating the necessary processes within the relevant decision-making bodies to ensure the participation of all those involved.

### Systemic safeguards

The school programme indicates how it fulfils its educational mandate in accordance with the needs of the students and the local conditions. The school programme is thus a written "director's manual" for the self-organised and autonomous development of a school, with the aim of ensuring and developing the long-term quality of teaching in a sustainable manner. After a period of testing, it is thus important to embed international education partnerships and projects within the school programme.



Partnerships are more stable and sustainable if they are embedded in the structures that surround them.





*To support the development of international education partnerships, we have identified internationalisation as one of the four strategic goals for the coming five years. To ensure a whole-institution approach, this goal envisages several activities that involves students as well as teachers and administrative staff, ranging from foreign language skills development to exchanges and joint delivery of programmes together with international partners. The department of international affairs will co-ordinate these activities at the institutional level.*

**Dr. Kakhaber Eradze**  
*Deputy Director of the National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement in Tbilisi, Georgia*

Such activities take on particular significance when the values and attitudes underlying the international project are clearly reflected in a school's mission statement. Possible formulations for embedding international projects in the mission statement include the following:

- "At our school, it is possible to experience global thinking and acting."
- "Global issues such as social justice, human rights, diversity and sustainability are firmly embedded in our school."
- "We place Global Learning at the centre of the development of our school and explore how global interconnections work and how they are impacted by individuals."
- "We give the students time and space to assume responsibility and to get involved in their personal environment to work towards a more just world."
- Safeguarding projects within the systemic structure of the school ensures their continued existence in the school's culture.

### **Inclusion and participation**

In international education partnerships and projects, students are the main actors. Everyone is welcome – regardless of their origin and biography, their special learning needs or their social and economic background. All those involved should be given the opportunity to help shape international education partnerships and projects (for further details see, Chapter 3.3).

### **Taking international education partnerships and projects into the classroom**

"Anyone who wants to act in a global world and be involved in shaping it must be able to understand global connections, embrace different perspectives and critically assess their own position." In order to embed an international education partnership or an educational project in the curriculum of the whole school, it is necessary to integrate it into the subject-specific work plans, which schools develop on the basis of core curricula. This ensures that the partnership will be reflected in the school's everyday life and not just within the framework of individual project days or working groups.

### **Making use of consultation options**

Schools can access advice and support through public institutions such as government ministries and teacher training institutes. Close cooperation and networking with non-school partners, such as environmental and development NGOs, also play a key role in ensuring the quality and further development of international education partnerships and projects (see Chapter 3.7).



## Overview

# Additional information on how to structurally embed a partnership

## The whole-institution approach in Education for Sustainable Development

Education for Sustainable Development can only unfold its full potential if the organisations that provide it work in a holistic way. If a place of learning follows the whole-institution approach, Education for Sustainable Development can become more than just a classroom topic. The methods and learning processes as well as event and organisational management should also be based on sustainability criteria. This includes continuing education measures for teachers and administrative staff as well as the participation of all parties in decision-making processes.

[www.t1p.de/whole-institution-approach](http://www.t1p.de/whole-institution-approach)

## The school's educational mission: The Lower Saxony School Act, an example from Germany

Article 2 of the Lower Saxony School Act defines the educational mandate of schools, which also leaves room for participation in international education partnerships and projects. "Students should be enabled

- to make fundamental rights effective for themselves and for each other, to understand the civic responsibility that arises from these rights and to contribute to a democratic society,
- to act in accordance with ethical principles and to recognise and respect religious and cultural values,
- to manage their relations with others in accordance with the principles of justice, solidarity, tolerance and gender equality,
- to grasp and support the idea of international understanding, especially the idea of a common future for the peoples of Europe, and to live together with people of other nations and cultures,
- to grasp economic and environmental connections,
- to take responsibility for the conservation of the environment and to live in a health-conscious manner,
- to solve conflicts in a rational manner, but also to endure conflicts,
- to obtain comprehensive information and to use that information critically
- to develop their perceptive and emotional faculties and their means of expression, including in the regionally significant forms of Low German and Frisian,
- to assert themselves in their professional life and to participate in shaping their social environments in a responsible manner."

[www.t1p.de/Bildungsauftrag-Schule](http://www.t1p.de/Bildungsauftrag-Schule)



### Multi-level partnership

## The Osterode model

Tilman-Riemenschneider-Gymnasium and Elhadj Diouf Foundation in Osterode am Harz, Germany, and Lycée Valdiodio Ndiaye and Association Koumby Saleh in Kaolack, Senegal

It all began with an email on 30 March 2012, in which Elhadj Mamadou Diouf, a German teacher from Kaolack, enthusiastically responded to the idea of Tobias Rusteberg, a French teacher from Osterode, to start a pen-friend project with their students. Eight years later, all those involved can look back with pride on the results, which include not only a school partnership, but also cooperation at the municipal level and the establishment of two foundations. The interplay of the three levels of school, community and foundation – the so-called “Osterode model” – has facilitated a long-term educational and exchange project between Osterode and Kaolack.

**Level 1 of the Osterode model** is the school partnership between the Tilman-Riemenschneider-Gymnasium in Osterode and the Lycée Valdiodio Ndiaye in Kaolack. In particular, exchange visits organised around different themes chosen by the students themselves (for example relating to participation, music, the environment, sports or art), have created a bridge between Osterode and Kaolack. After each encounter, Junior ambassadors are appointed who report on the project results and their experiences in the form

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*“If you manage to get through to young people, you can achieve a lot”*

*This quote from our late colleague Elhadj Mamadou Diouf has touched us because young people are the driving force behind our partnership with Osterode. The regular meetings are immensely enriching for everyone involved. We all learn from each other and motivate each other to get involved in our respective communities. Such results can only be achieved through an exchange of ideas and understanding as well as with commitment and patience on the part of everyone involved. Kaolack is the first and, to my knowledge, only African city to be involved in a partnership at all three levels, and it would be a source of pride for us too if we were able to inspire other cities as well.*

**Djibril Thiam**

*German teacher at the Lycée Valdiodio Ndiaye*

of presentations. This school partnership enables the students to learn from each other, to confront their future in a globalised world, to develop more realistic images of both Africa and Europe and to commit themselves to the Agenda 2030. All those involved (teachers, parents, students and partners outside the schools) are touched by how much the encounters have opened their eyes and created mutual understanding – emotionally and cognitively.

**Level 2** involves the extension of the school projects to the community. The city of Osterode participated in the international project “Municipal Climate Partnerships”. Inspired by the junior ambassadors of the Tilman-Riemenschneider-Gymnasium in Osterode, the city of Osterode added the SDGs to its spectrum of activities in early 2018. The aim of the project is to initiate climate-friendly changes in both Osterode and Kaolack. Representatives of the city of Osterode and the district of Kaolack have met several times to discuss issues related to drought, flooding and reforestation. Students are also involved in the project. In Kaolack, for example, they have formed a climate action group, spurred on by the network of junior ambassadors, among other factors.

**Level 3** includes the Elhadj Diouf Foundation (EDF) in Osterode, which was founded in June 2018. The foundation’s objectives are to promote education, exchanges and different perspectives. The EDF is in close contact with Osterode citizens, business people and the students’ parents. It provides information about the exchange programmes and acts as a platform for the alumni network. In parallel with the EDF, the Association Koumbi Saleh was founded in Kaolack in pursuit of the same objectives. The most important guiding principle behind the two foundations is to encourage young people to get involved in shaping their respective communities. Successful initiatives have already been launched in various areas, including sports, health and education.

[www.trg-osterode.de/auslandskontakte/kaolack-senegal](http://www.trg-osterode.de/auslandskontakte/kaolack-senegal)

[www.elhadj-diouf-foundation.de](http://www.elhadj-diouf-foundation.de)

[www.koumbisaleh.org](http://www.koumbisaleh.org)



## 3.3 Opening up spaces for participatory learning

By Gabriele Janecki and Jessica Schwarz

*How can learners be fully involved in the planning and implementation of projects?*

Contributing to a more sustainable world requires the active participation of all of us. However, the ability to participate should not be taken for granted. The development of the relevant skills therefore needs to be encouraged and practised. Given that they focus on the experiences and participation of learners, international education partnerships and projects are well suited for opening up learning spaces that enable participatory and holistic educational processes within the framework of Global Learning. They offer learners the freedom to recognise and reflect on their interests and needs, to experiment with their own ideas and conceptions and to try out possibilities for action towards a more globally just world. The more learners are able to contribute their skills and experience, the more intense their experience of participation and autonomy will be and the greater their willingness to take action in society.

”

*Participatory learning spaces are particularly effective when teachers hand over responsibility and decision-making power and learners are willing and capable of taking on this responsibility and decision-making power.*

**Jessica Schwarz**  
Research Associate at the  
Institute for Social Sciences,  
Political Science Department,  
University of Hildesheim,  
Germany

### Learning how to be socially engaged in international education contexts

In order to empower learners to experience autonomy and self-efficacy and to underpin educational processes in a holistic and pedagogical way, it is important to identify and apply suitable and diverse participation formats. Getting learners involved depends largely on two factors: Participation can provide added value for learners if the structures of involvement and responsibility are situated within the framework of education projects of limited scope and duration.

International education partnerships and projects are able to offer both. Many of these activities and measures are limited in time, for example to the duration of a school year, an exchange visit or a specific annual theme. They enable participants to engage in personal discussions and to exchange ideas with partners from the Global North and South, to get to know and reflect on their own opinions and values as well as those of others, to develop ideas for their own involvement, and much more.

The more inclusive and participation-oriented the design of global education projects and contexts is, the more successful they will be at achieving the goals of transformational Global Learning, such as the recognition of global interconnections, a change of perspective, self-reflection, the development of communication skills and empowerment.

## Facilitating peer learning and a sense of orientation

In their role as participatory learning spaces, international education partnerships and projects are ideally also spaces of peer learning, in which a mutual, active exchange between learners takes place on an equal footing, based on trust in the knowledge and experience of all participants. Learners contribute their own topics and questions, discuss them among themselves and develop them into projects with like-minded people. As a rule, the topics should be linked to the learners' real-life environments. Starting from their own personal environment, the participants can ask new questions and thus deepen their understanding of global contexts.

Teachers or external educators can support this process most effectively if they offer learners acceptance, recognition and activities in which they can express, clarify and implement their interests. To this end, they should design a framework for open learning spaces with mandatory and participation measures that relate to each other in a meaningful way.



## Degrees of participation

It should be borne in mind that international education projects are not always able to facilitate the full participation of all those involved, for example as a result of specifications from funding organisations, curricula, etc., that can hardly be changed. That is why it is important to inform all those involved in the project about fundamental decisions that have already been made and cannot be altered. This makes it possible to communicate the framework within which participation can take place through different formats at different levels of the project.

Ideally, a participatory learning space should allow for a combination of different degrees of participation:

- At the lowest level of participation, consultations or hearings enable learners to ask specific questions and provide input.
- Through co-decision processes, learners are able to actively influence the content and implementation of a project.
- Participation involves learners in joint decision-making at certain stages of the project and requires them to take responsibility.
- Self-determination, self-organisation and self-administration means that learners take the initiative and autonomously design and implement individual project phases.



*By getting involved in the planning and implementation of an exchange programme with our South African partner school, I learned how important and exciting it is to get to know different cultures, to leave your comfort zone and to value international partnerships.*

**Carina Henkel**

*Former student at the Wechloy Vocational School, Germany*

### Taking the diversity of learners into account

In addition to diversity in the forms of learning, it is also important to involve as many and diverse learning groups as possible. The variety in the living conditions, social opportunities, cultural, religious, sexual and political characteristics of today's learners is also reflected in their approaches and strategies for positioning themselves in an increasingly complex world.

In order to be able to meet the different needs and skills of learners, it is therefore important to allow for as many different application options as possible when selecting participants (for example, by means of interviews, written applications or artistic or musical contributions). Learners who have so far had little contact with the educational topics and formats in question should be actively targeted. Former participants can informally advise and assist potential applicants, thereby empowering them and increasing their level of participation.

It is therefore a prerequisite for diversity in international education partnerships and projects to put in place diverse participation instruments that highlight the respective potential of each learner and to take into account the needs of many different people.

In general, learners should be involved in the project design, but they should not be overburdened. Combined with a positive attitude on the part of teachers and providers towards the content and activities of global education projects, this will create a strong basis for achieving the desired objectives.

connect4change

Everybody should be encouraged to participate in the creation of a sustainable world





## Overview

# Methods for designing participatory learning spaces

In order to make learning spaces participatory at all levels, diverse methods should be used to implement participation processes in a structured and efficient way, to make processes varied and interesting and to achieve sound solutions based on broad support.

Selecting the right methods is essential for the success of participation processes. Each method comes with its own inherent potential, effects and limitations. Some are very well suited to soliciting opinions and reactions. Others are effective in mobilising people and encouraging them to participate. Certain methods can be used to stimulate discussion, plan projects together or develop projects, while others prepare the ground for long-term cooperation or conflict resolution.

In longer or more complex processes, it makes sense to combine various methods in order to meet the different requirements at the different stages of participation and to be able to more effectively reach different target groups.

## Methodologies for “participation and sustainable development”

The website “Participation & Sustainable Development in Europe”, which is maintained by the Austrian Ministry for Climate Protection, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK), offers an excellent compilation of different participation methods.

[www.partizipation.at/methoden.html](http://www.partizipation.at/methoden.html)

## Methodologies for democratic and participatory processes at kindergarten and primary school level (only available in German)

As part of the project “Learning Spaces for Democracy at Pre- and Primary School Age”, the German Children and Youth Foundation has published a methodology kit for educators, which serves as a tool for initiating participation and democratic processes in kindergartens and primary schools. Many of these methods can also be transferred to work with older children, adolescents and (young) adults.

[www.t1p.de/Methodenmappe-Lernorte-Demokratie](http://www.t1p.de/Methodenmappe-Lernorte-Demokratie)

## “Participatory Methods” website

The website of the “Participation, Inclusion and Social Change Cluster” of the Institute for Development Studies at the University of Sussex offers a wide range of participation methods for developing ideas and actions to promote inclusive development and social change. These methods focus on learning and education processes, project development and political action by civil society actors.

[www.participatorymethods.org](http://www.participatorymethods.org)



Die Climate Cycle Tour in Südafrika



International youth project

## Meet, think, act – global peers for sustainable development

Peer Leader International e.V.

Peer Leader International (PLI) is an international youth project whose approach is based on intercultural youth work and peer education. The centre is located in Ostrhauderfehn in Northern Germany. At present, about 200 peer leaders from various backgrounds are active in 10 countries. In close cooperation with international partners, they research issues, design and develop project ideas and then put these into practice. The young people themselves choose the topics based on their everyday life and reality. The aim of all these activities is to inform and mobilise others to work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

PLI's partners are grassroots groups and non-governmental organisations. With some of them, PLI has established long-term partnerships, and with others the cooperation is project-specific.

The organisation uses a wide range of educational and learning spaces to arrive at common project themes. Learning takes

place outside the school setting, for instance on the internet or through conferences, seminars or project visits. The principle of peer learning is crucial for all activities: At PLI, projects are created whenever young people become interested in a topic. By communicating with each other, they shape ideas and formats for different types of projects.

**Here are some examples:**

- A seminar on the topic of “youth and politics” gave rise to the idea of developing a preventive educational tool against corruption, which is now available.
- After working in refugee camps in Greece, PLI Germany developed teaching and project modules on the topic of “refugees and migration”. Seminars on the topic were held in Israel and South Africa, where young people compared the situation in their respective countries and exchanged views on issues relating to asylum.
- In Germany, young people from PLI South Africa discovered the idea of the PLI food truck. They developed their own food truck in South Africa and combined it with training courses on healthy nutrition, global agribusiness and knowledge transfer to implement a small start-up business.
- The project “Climate Cycle Tour” deals with the consequences of climate change. It takes the form of a bicycle tour through five countries, with daily public readings of “Noah’s Ark Reloaded” at each stop and discussions with young people about what they can do to combat climate change (see [www.climatecycle.de](http://www.climatecycle.de)).

However, the work at PLI comes with its own challenges: Direct communication usually takes place through physical encounters, which in turn can cause problems. It is not so much the intercultural misunderstandings and differences that hamper the work, although these occur time and again and are often perceived as stressful. Using English as a common (foreign) language can lead to misunderstandings, and newcomers are often unaccustomed to openly expressing their points of view, especially when older people are present. And while international meetings are full of energy and big ideas, implementing these locally needs a lot of commitment over a long period of time.

To overcome these challenges, PLI is planning a digital “peer campus”, which will serve as an open platform for exchanging information, generating ideas and coordinating actions in the future. This makes it possible for small-scale collaborations to grow into large, effective projects for a common, sustainable future.

[www.peerleader.org](http://www.peerleader.org)  
[www.lead2future.org](http://www.lead2future.org)



Peer leaders submit proposals for how to improve the school system to the Minister of Education of the German state of Lower Saxony

## 3.4 Conducting good public relations work

By Juliane Jesse

*How can public relations work be made successful and attentive to discrimination?*



”

*Beyond its public impact, public relations work is both an educational format that imparts knowledge and a way of representing specific interests. It shows how important and valuable international education partnerships are and thus also sends a political message to society.*

**Juliane Jesse**  
One World Promoter  
for Public Relations and  
International Affairs with the  
Association for Development  
Policy of Lower Saxony,  
Germany

Public relations work plays an important role in international education partnerships and projects: it not only conveys what happened during the activities or an exchange, but also provides insights into real-life environments and international cooperation. Successful public relations work reflects the participants' experiences and insights.

There are as many different forms of public relations work as there are goals and target groups. It is not always necessary to focus on all objectives and target groups. In terms of your own capacities, you should consider how much public relations work you are able to do and what its focus should be. In general, however, the aim should be to inform all the parties who are directly or indirectly involved in the partnerships and projects – for example the decision-makers, sponsors and financial backers, the participants themselves and their social environments and local communities – about the progress, activities and results of the work. This can be done by addressing them directly or through contact with media representatives.

### Core content

In the context of public relations work, the aim is to highlight different real-life environments and to impart knowledge about the partner country, to emphasise commonalities, dismantle mutual prejudices, share reflected experiences and report on successes.

The goal of successful public relations work should also be to provide answers to the following questions: What are the specific global links that connect us? What is the impact of our actions on the lives of our partners? How can we make a joint contribution to global justice and sustainability? To what extent is the present shaped by (colonial) history? This is not simply a matter of presenting ourselves in a positive light. Honesty and authenticity are important, and stories of obstacles and challenges should also be told. The reports should arouse curiosity, encourage reflection, create awareness of the issues presented and motivate more people to take action.

## General principles

There are a few ground rules to ensure that these goals are achieved as effectively as possible. Any reporting should focus on the “W” questions. Who is doing what exactly, and where, when, how and why? The precise sequence depends on the story being told. What made the experience special, why was it exciting – these are the aspects on which the public relations work should focus. A story told in chronological order is only rarely exciting, and there is no need to beat around the bush either.

Especially in the case of a direct encounter, the participants will be flooded with impressions that they need to classify and process. Outsiders do not have that chance, which is why it is all the more important to carefully choose the impressions that are passed on. For example, not everybody wants to show the entire world how they live. A joint agreement should therefore be reached as to which aspects can and cannot be reported on.

## Words and images create facts

The focus should be on the people who experienced the stories themselves, which can be brought to life with the help of quotations. In the framework of partnership projects, representatives of all partners should have their say. Of course, these could be the organisers of the project or partnership – but the perspective of the participants, for instance young people themselves, is often much more exciting. A more or less equal share of speaking time between the partners from North and South is desirable, but it is absolutely essential that all partners are represented on equal terms. Who is presented as being active and who as passive? In a partnership, this should be balanced, and it is just as important to present this to the outside world. After all, words create facts. Language can either be used to (unconsciously) perpetuate (colonial) power imbalances or to consciously break them down.

This applies not only to texts, but also to images. Stereotypical representations should be avoided, for example the recurring image of donations being handed over or a white person dressed in European clothes among many small, black children in school uniforms. Familiar images in people’s minds and exotic-looking motifs are reproduced time and again and thus become entrenched, although they probably represent only a very small part of the reality in the respective partner country. It is essential to reflect on these issues with all those involved in the partnership and thus to promote balanced reporting. In addition, anyone shown on a photograph has to agree to its publication, as does the person who took it. A joint image pool of the partner organisations, for example via a cloud platform, provides space for different perspectives and greater variety.

Code of Conduct on Images and Messages, Concord:  
[www.t1p.de/concord-CoC-Images-and-Messages](http://www.t1p.de/concord-CoC-Images-and-Messages)

## Overview

# Options for public relations work



Posters created by the pupils of the Schule am Wingster Wald, Germany

### Designing posters and showcases

By displaying a large poster or a showcase in a clearly visible location in a school, association or youth club, it is possible to reach many (young) people – literally in passing.

It is important that the contents can be quickly grasped and are clearly structured. Large headings should summarise the most important points, and the text should be short and to the point. In many cases, detailed bullet points will be sufficient. The font size should be chosen so that it can be easily read from a distance of one meter. Simple fonts are ideal. Handwritten designs should be avoided because of their poor legibility. Photos are also important, and they should depict a large motif rather than many small details. A caption should explain the subject of the photo and who took it.

### Publishing reports on a website

Does the school, association or organisation have a website? In addition to important information about the project and its sponsors, the website should also include testimonials. Or perhaps some of the participants have their own blog where they would like to publish their experiences? Using the free Wordpress tool, it is also possible to quickly create a website for the project. This would allow the reports of both partner organisations to be published on the same platform. In the case of joint websites, it should always be clearly indicated who the authors of the individual texts are. It is also important that the articles are properly structured. Each text should cover only one topic, otherwise it will be too long, and its various aspects can be clarified by means of subheadings. Websites offer plenty of space for images, which can be compiled in a photo gallery, for example. Or perhaps short videos have been created that could also be uploaded?



Website of the Gesamtschule Bremen Mitte, Germany, with information about its partnership with an association in Nairobi, Kenya



## Social media

Messengers such as WhatsApp and social media such as Instagram or Facebook can also be used for public relations purposes. During an exchange visit, this makes it possible to share pictures with friends, family or a wider audience in real time. Using the “Story” function, pictures and videos are available for a maximum of 24 hours, which makes it ideal for uploading funny snapshots, for example. If published as a post, pictures become permanently visible. A short text should describe why the picture is being published, who took it and what added value it offers to users. This enables the participants to convey important facts or to share their impressions in a reflected way. Depending on the platform, the pictures have different formats and sizes – Facebook uses the landscape format while Instagram favours portrait or square formats. Using a hashtag makes the posts easier to find, which is why it also makes sense for the participants to agree on a common one. In addition, the reach of social media posts can also be enhanced if all participants share the posts with each other or tag each other in the text and images.

## Media relations

Ideally, someone knows a media representative and can arrange a meeting with him/her. During an interview, the journalist will ask questions and then use the answers to write a text that he/she will then release for publication.

If no direct links to media representatives exist, a press release can help to make the educational partnership known to the public. Since journalists receive a lot of information every day, it is important to explain to them right from the start why this information or report should be published in a newspaper, on the radio or on television. The easier it is for the journalist to process the press release, the better, bringing you one step closer to getting it published. To this end, the “W” questions need to be considered, starting with the most important one. Quotes from the people involved are particularly significant in this respect. A good photo also increases the chance of being featured in a newspaper, for example. It is important to provide a contact person including a telephone number for possible questions. The press release should be sent by email with the photos attached. The contact details can be found in the publisher’s imprint inside the newspaper or on the websites of the media outlets in question.



Facebook page of Youth for Environment and Sustainable Development (YSD) from Lilongwe, Malawi, with photos from the “Connect for Change” conference



Newspaper article about the partnership between Vocational School No. 1 in Gifhorn, Germany and the St. Germain School in Agona Swedru, Ghana



## 3.5 Securing funding

By Viktoria Jeske

*Where funding options are available and which steps have to be taken into account?*



”

*For the ENSA programme, it is crucial that school partnerships secure long-term financial support in order to become sustainable – even without ENSA funding.*

*Especially for students, this field offers exciting challenges and calls for creative thinking.*

*Money is often one of the main factors that determine how close a partnership really is.*

**Viktoria Jeske**  
Project Coordinator,  
ENSA Programme,  
Engagement Global,  
Germany

Whenever people work and learn together as part of an education partnership, money is usually needed. When applying for or raising funds, it is important to have detailed knowledge of the project itself and to be able to describe it convincingly. Consequently, the project and the costs first need to be specified.

### Defining the project objectives and finding suitable funding programmes/organisations

What is the purpose of the project? It makes sense to consider which objectives are particularly important and where there is room for manoeuvre. Some funding organisations only support projects with very specific goals. Sometimes it may be possible to adjust the project goals accordingly, and sometimes the conclusion will be that the project is not a good fit for the funding organisations. The important thing is that the objectives do not contradict each other and that the applicants stand behind their project.

Answering the following key questions may also be helpful: How and where should the project be implemented? Is it a small project that should only take place and have an effect in one institution? Or does the project target people beyond the institution in order to invite them to participate? Could the project be repeated or carried out jointly with other schools, non-governmental organisations, municipalities or local authorities? These questions can help to identify other organisations that might be interested in supporting the project (also financially).

### Drawing up a cost plan

Organising project activities usually costs money. For this reason, general work plans (see Chapter 2.3) need to be translated into concrete cost plans that specify the required budget for each measure. It is very important to have a realistic cost plan. A priority should be to ensure the “efficient use of funds”, namely the principle that all costs incurred are actually necessary for the implementation of the project and that they are used as efficiently as possible. In this context, the following questions should be asked: Do we really have to purchase specific items, or can we also borrow them somewhere (free of charge)? Who would be able to support individual activities by donating time or/and expertise? Once the measures have been defined and budgeted, it is possible to estimate how much money is needed to implement the project.

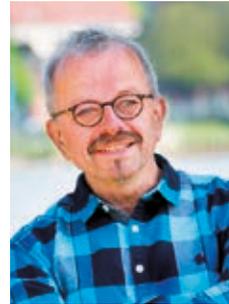
While the project is still in the planning phase, it is important that no financial commitments are made, and that no money is spent on anything for which funding has been requested. Any such premature expenditures are generally not eligible for funding and may also have a negative impact on the overall eligibility of the project. However, sometimes it is possible to request that a measure can be started earlier.

## Funding options

There are generally two ways to get funding for a partnership or project. Irrespective of which option you choose, you need to allow for sufficient time. Depending on the size of the project and the planned costs, it can take several months or even a year to raise the money.

**Option 1** is to collect donations by raising money from private individuals or companies. Special care should be taken when presenting the partners and the objectives of the project. Donations are also a sensitive topic in development work, as there is a risk of catering to and consolidating stereotypes. What should the money be used for? To support the “poor” partners or to support a joint project? How are the partners represented? As in need of help, to appeal to the “donor’s heart”, or on equal terms? How do those who are asking for donations view their own role? Do they see themselves as “helpers” or as partners with equal rights? It is important to critically reflect on these issues. After all, a meaningful educational project is not about humanitarian aid, but about covering the costs of meetings and joint project work, which also needs to be clearly stated in the communication with donors.

**Option 2** is to apply for funds from institutions that run dedicated project funding programmes. These include foundations, governmental or even church institutions. They have clear funding guidelines, which normally stipulate that an application form must be filled out. Before submitting an application, you should read these guidelines to minimise errors and avoid unnecessary work. In the case of larger applications, it is often also possible to submit only an outline and to obtain advice first. It should be noted that there are usually deadlines for the submission of larger applications, for example one or two fixed dates per year when they can be submitted. Missing these deadlines translates into lost time. Once the project starts, income and expenditure need to be accurately documented, proof of which must be provided by the end of the project at the latest. This usually has to be accompanied by a report on the content of the project. Should there be any deviation from the information provided in the application during the implementation of the project, the sponsors must be notified and give their consent.



”

*Although physical encounters within the framework of international education projects are expensive, it is nevertheless possible to get funding. However, there is often no money for preparatory and follow-up activities or team trainers that could support the work. Depending on the conditions imposed by different donors, collaborative projects may have to be divided into a Northern and a Southern part. This leads to Northern dominance, regardless of whether the partnership is founded on equal terms or not, since projects are usually financed by organisations from the Global North, coupled with formal and content-specific conditions.*

**Harald Kleem**  
Board Member of  
Peer Leader International,  
Germany

connectforchange



## Overview

# Funding options for international education partnerships and projects

## 1. Collecting donations

### Events & festivals

It is possible to present the partnership and/or the planned activities during events and festivals. For example, regular school events such as a Christmas fair or an open day can offer an opportunity to set up a stand or organise an activity related to the project. A town festival could also be an appropriate occasion, or you could organise your own events, for example with a specific theme based on the project work where you could offer activities or materials connected to the topic.

### Fundraising & sponsoring

Fundraising is about finding people who are willing to give money to the partnership or project (on a regular basis). These are usually private individuals or companies who are looking to support charitable goals in the long term and who are perhaps happy to tell others about their own involvement or simply to do good. These individuals should be regularly informed about how “their” money is contributing to the achievement of the project goals.

In contrast to fundraising, the main reason why sponsors will support a project is to promote themselves. For example, companies may want to reach new target groups, or they may want to be perceived as being highly responsible. In the case of sponsoring, a contract is often drawn up between the two parties, which specifies the exact nature of the support (money or other material support), how it is to be used and the publicity measures that the project team will undertake to draw attention to the project and the sponsors. Possible contacts for sponsorship could be local savings banks or companies, for example.

### Crowdfunding

Internet portals allow you to register your project in order to raise funds. These include Betterplace from Germany and international platforms such as Globalgiving or Kickstarter. You should also check whether the portal is operated by non-profit or commercial providers. For crowdfunding, it is important to present yourself in a convincing and professional manner, for example by means of an appealing video about the project.

[www.betterplace.org](http://www.betterplace.org)  
[www.globalgiving.org](http://www.globalgiving.org)  
[www.kickstarter.com](http://www.kickstarter.com)



## 2. Securing financing from foundations, associations, funding institutions and churches Examples from Germany

### Foundations

In Germany, there are many foundations that use their assets to pursue a specific cause stipulated by the founder. You can search for these directly on the website of the Association of German Foundations, which represents the interests of more than 20,000 charitable foundations. You can search by keyword, location, state, or specifically by the field of activity a foundation should have in order to qualify as a potential supporter.

[www.stiftungssuche.de](http://www.stiftungssuche.de)

### Lotteries and their foundations

Many state lotteries use their profits to support charitable, international or environmental projects. One example in Germany is "Aktion Mensch", which supports social projects. Other lotteries only support projects in certain states, such as the Lower Saxony Bingo Foundation for Environmental and Development Cooperation, which supports environmental and nature conservation projects as well as development cooperation and monument preservation projects. It is funded through the gambling levy, which is largely financed by income from "Bingo-Die Umweltlotterie".

[www.aktion-mensch.de/foerderung](http://www.aktion-mensch.de/foerderung)

[www.t1p.de/lotterien](http://www.t1p.de/lotterien)

[www.bingo-umweltstiftung.de](http://www.bingo-umweltstiftung.de)

### Churches

Churches can also provide (financial) support for a partnership or project. You can present your project to the local church community and ask for support. In addition, some churches also have agencies where you can officially apply for financial support, for example "Brot für die Welt", the development agency of the German Protestant church. These organisations promote both development education and encounters in the field of development work. Another option is the Catholic Fund, which also offers funding for development education and public relations work.

[www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/projekte/inlandsfoerderung](http://www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/projekte/inlandsfoerderung)

[www.katholischer-fonds.de](http://www.katholischer-fonds.de)

### **Engagement Global – advice and support for involvement in development work**

Engagement Global operates on behalf of the German government and is financed by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. Its services include information, counselling, further training, financial support and networking. As far as financial support is concerned, it offers various options ranging from funding for smaller projects up to €2,000 to multi-year project financing.

[www.engagement-global.de/finanzielle-foerderung.html](http://www.engagement-global.de/finanzielle-foerderung.html)

## **3. Programmes for promoting exchange visits and encounters**

### **ENSA – Engagement Global’s programme for school exchanges in the field of development work**

The programme supports new and existing school partnerships between Germany and Africa, Asia, Latin America and Southeast Europe – financially, but also by providing educational support and advice.

<https://t1p.de/ensa-program>

### **School partnership programme of the Pedagogical Exchange Service of the Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs**

Within the framework of the initiative “Schools: Partners for the Future” (PASCH), the Pedagogical Exchange Service offers grants for German and foreign student groups and their teachers. The standard application form can be used to apply for grants to cover travel and programme costs for student groups, while funding for project costs is available via the supplementary application.

<https://t1p.de/pasch-initiative>

### **Erasmus+ zur Förderung europäischer Partnerschaften und Projekte**

Erasmus+ ist das EU-Programm für allgemeine und berufliche Bildung, Jugend und Sport. Es gibt verschiedene Fördertöpfe, um z. B. einen Jugendaustausch oder einen Fachkräfteaustausch zu finanzieren. Die Gelder sind allerdings nur für europäische Partnerschaften und Projekte bestimmt.

[www.erasmusplus.de/](http://www.erasmusplus.de/)

## 3.6 Making the necessary travel arrangements

By Sarah Laustroer

In non-European educational partnerships, you need to research at an early stage what documents and vaccinations are required for the trip. There are different regulations for different countries and the nationality of the travellers can also make a difference. A participant who lives in Germany but only has a Turkish passport, for example, may be subject to different rules than a participant with a German passport. Care and time are needed to make the arrangements and obtain the necessary documents for an exchange visit. If documents are missing, the trip may have to be cancelled or participants have to stay home. The following questions should therefore be addressed as early as possible:

*What documents are required and what can be done to support a visa application?*

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- Is a visa necessary for entry? If so, what is needed for the application?
- Are the travellers covered by insurance? Is it necessary to take out additional health insurance for travelling abroad, possibly including liability insurance?
- Are there any vaccinations that are required for entry into the country?
- Are any special documents required for the trip? In the case of minors this should be carefully checked, as even airlines sometimes require certified declarations of consent and copies of the identity cards of their legal guardians.
- Do all travellers have a (valid) passport? The passport must be valid for at least three months after the trip and contain enough blank pages. If not, or if travellers do not yet have a passport, they need to apply for one as soon as possible, as the passport number will also be required for other documents.

This chapter focuses on visa applications. The checklists at the end of the chapter distinguish between “Information for German citizens travelling to the partner country” and “Applying for a visa to enter Germany”. The information for German citizens is of a more general nature, as the exact regulations differ from country to country. Consequently, the general information may also be of interest to non-German partners. First of all, it should be noted that inequalities become particularly apparent when travelling. German citizens enjoy visa-free travel for up to three months even to many non-European countries, whereas many non-European citizens require a visa to enter Germany, often need to present additional documents and are subject to closer scrutiny.



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*The German Ambassador visited us and helped us to establish a home garden and to paint the Golden Youth Club (GYC) house. We cooked together and shared a meal on Mandela Day. GYC gets invitations to public events of the Embassy and we also have opportunities to share our future projects with them. When the Embassy knows what you are capable off and how your projects make an impact in your society, some things start to be easy to deal with, even a visa application. They informed us what exactly needs to be done and which documents are needed in order to avoid a visa being declined. It is easier now because they don't only read in the papers what GYC is all about, but they know about our partnership with Germany.*

**Nomatlou Mahlangu**  
Founder of the Golden Youth Club  
and member of  
Peer Leader International,  
South Africa

### More successful preparation through close cooperation between partners

To make all the necessary arrangements for travel and visa applications, early cooperation and regular communication between the partners are essential. Although the content of the programme should be determined jointly by the partners, the hosts will usually handle much of the organisational work for the meeting, such as booking accommodation. You should provide your partners with all the necessary information so that they are well informed and can make the necessary preparations. Participants applying for a visa need to know the agenda and where they will be staying. Especially when non-European partners travel to Germany, it is very likely that supporting documents from Germany will be required for the visa application – you can find an initial overview of these documents in the guidelines for applying for a visa to enter Germany. Both sides should therefore familiarise themselves with the requirements and coordinate with each other.

### More successful preparation through close cooperation with the authorities

In addition to the completeness and accuracy of the documents, credibility and possibly even sympathy can play a role in the granting of visas. Part of the evaluation revolves around the question of whether the individuals applying for a visa may pose a danger to the country to which they wish to travel. In this context, “Danger” refers both to the likelihood that they will commit an offence and to the possibility that they will not return but will remain “illegally” in the country. People travelling to a richer country are often examined more critically, which is why it is advisable to minimise any potential issues as much as possible. If people are applying for a visa for the other country for the first time, they will probably be examined more critically than the second time.

A good relationship with the authorities can be helpful when it comes to obtaining visas. If the hosts have a relationship of mutual trust with local authorities, government ministries or the mayor, they can ask them for a supporting document to declare their support for the project/partnership (and the entry of the project partners into the country). Letters of recommendation from an official authority from the “sending” country about the work and character of the people applying for a visa can also facilitate the process.

It is therefore important to make sure that the project/partnership is known locally, to the municipality and to the authorities. The programme of the exchange trip should include a visit to the local authorities, for example a small reception at the town hall. This is a good way to cultivate contacts and raise awareness. In the case of regular exchange visits, a long-term cooperation with the embassies should also be established.



## Overview

# Information for German citizens travelling to the partner country as well as general tips

Created in collaboration with Engagement Global

The website of the embassy of the respective country will provide detailed information on the requirements for the trip. If a visa is required for entry into the country, the application form and other regulations can also be found there. Visa applications can either be made by post (in which case a self-addressed, stamped envelope should be enclosed), as an e-visa or via a personal interview at the embassy.

### Additional hints and tips for the trip:

- Make back-up copies of all your travel documents and carry them with you when you travel. Keep the copies in a different place from the original travel documents.
- Take additional biometric photos with you in case you need to apply for a replacement passport.
- Make sure to be aware of the relevant customs, health and currency regulations.
- Should you lose any travel documents, ask for a copy of the theft report and the police report for submission to the insurance companies.
- Other visa formalities may apply to participants without German citizenship/with dual nationality.
- Stopovers in third countries also need to be taken into account when planning the trip and applying for visas.
- Travellers who are minors require the following additional documents: a letter from their parents, a certified copy and translation of their birth certificate, copies of the parents' passports, custody documents.
- You can register with ELEFAND, the crisis prevention list of the German Foreign Office. In the event of a crisis, this allows the German Foreign Office to get a quick overview of all German citizens who are present in the affected region in order to organise help for them.  
[www.elefand.diplo.de/elefandextern/home/login!form.action](http://www.elefand.diplo.de/elefandextern/home/login!form.action)

## Overview

# Applying for a visa to enter Germany

### Created in collaboration with Engagement Global

A Schengen visa is required to enter Germany. The visa application requires a personal interview at the embassy, where all the necessary documents need to be presented. In most cases, the appointment must be made via an online booking system. It may happen that the next appointment is only available two months later. It is therefore important to book an appointment in good time, while making sure that all the necessary documents will be ready by then.

Due to the large number of documents that have to be submitted, it is advisable to start preparing early. The following checklist specifies the documents that are usually required for the visa application (originals and copies). The requirements vary from country to country and may be subject to change, which is why it is essential to do proper research. Detailed information is available, for example, on the website of the German embassy in the country in question.

### The following documents, both originals and copies, are generally required:

- ✓ Schengen visa application form
- ✓ A valid passport with enough blank pages
- ✓ A recent biometric photo with a white background
- ✓ A confirmation letter from the employer
- ✓ Confirmation of reservation for the outward and return flight
- ✓ A travel itinerary with dates of arrival and departure
- ✓ Proof of accommodation
- ✓ Proof of sufficient financial means for the trip
  1. Applicants must be able to show that they have sufficient financial means of their own for the trip.
  2. Frequently, this is replaced by a declaration of commitment on the part of the inviting party. You need to apply for a declaration of commitment with the competent immigration authority in Germany – preferably as a legal entity and not as a private individual – and send the original to the person making the application. You should research beforehand which documents are required for issuing a declaration of commitment. The documents listed below are for guidance only.
    - a) Declaration of commitment from a private individual  
As a general rule, you will have to present a completed application form (to be found on the internet), your pay slips for the previous three months and a health insurance policy for the invited person. In addition, there is also a fee of about €25.
    - b) Declaration of commitment from a legal person  
In addition to the completed form, the following must be submitted: a financial report, stating that €750 are available as collateral for each invited person; the latest



annual financial accounts; a recent bank statement; an extract from the register of associations in which the chairperson is named; a power of attorney from the chairperson if he/she will not go to the immigration office in person; the passport of the chairperson and, possibly also of the person handing over the documents with power of attorney. A fee of approximately €29 must be paid for each declaration of commitment.

- ✓ Proof of medical insurance, valid for the entire Schengen area and for the entire duration of the stay with a minimum cover of €30,000
- ✓ A letter of invitation from the inviting party with the following information:
  - The personal data of the invited person, as shown on the passport
  - Information about the reason for the trip and the programme
  - A description of the work of the association/organisation
  - The qualifications and significance of the travellers for the partnership/the joint project
  - Information on the existing relationship with the person in question (e.g. photos, correspondence, previous meetings, etc.)
  - Information about financing (especially if public funds are involved)
  - Proof that the travel costs to and within Germany, including accommodation and meals (as well as health insurance) are covered
- ✓ Proof of willingness to return: any document proving that the applicant is firmly rooted in his or her own country of origin will be accepted.

### **Additional documentation required for minors:**

- ✓ A certified copy of the birth certificate
- ✓ A declaration of consent from all persons with custody, signed in the presence of embassy staff; if the guardians are unable to appear in person at the embassy
  - A declaration of consent signed and notarised by all the guardians and copies of the guardians' identity documents
  - Proof in the case of sole custody (e.g. a death certificate, divorce certificate with custody agreement, guardianship, etc.)
- ✓ A letter of confirmation from the school, proof of exemption from classes for the duration of the trip

Documents issued in Germany should be sent to the partners in the original by post and as a copy by email so that they can be submitted together with the other necessary paperwork. You should find out how long it takes for the standard post to arrive and how secure it is. DHL Express is the fastest and safest way to send the documents. You should allow 5-10 days and about €60 for this.

The decision whether to grant the visa lies with the German embassy in the respective country. If the application for a Schengen visa is rejected, there is the possibility of lodging an appeal (remonstration). Should this become necessary, the German partners should also assist by submitting additional documents.

## 3.7 Implementing sustainability in a holistic manner

By Gabriele Janecki

*How can a partnership or project become a model for sustainable action?*



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*Teaching sustainability is great! But it is not enough to just talk about sustainability or to accumulate knowledge.*

*We need to change the way we act and learn how to transform our private, educational and professional lives in order to become agents of social change ourselves. In international education partnerships and projects, it's important to practise what is being taught as much as possible.*

**Gabriele Janecki**  
Educational Assistant and  
Project Manager,  
Association of Lower Saxony  
Education Initiatives (VNB),  
Germany

International education partnerships and projects can make a significant contribution to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. On the path towards global change, however, it is not enough to design learning content and formats in such a way that they enable learners to act sustainably – it is equally important to set a good example by practising sustainability.

Within the framework of international education partnerships and projects, sustainability aspects can be taken into account in many areas, whether in internal planning meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences or in the organisation of exchange visits and other activities and measures. Air travel and local transport, catering, the provision of learning and teaching materials and conference proceedings consume environmental resources, produce waste and have an impact on people's living and economic conditions – locally and globally. However, sustainable planning also requires inclusive planning. We live in a diverse society and this should be reflected in international education partnerships and projects.

When planning, implementing and evaluating projects, you should always consider how your education partnership could become a model of sustainable development. Not only within the organisational team, but also together with the participants themselves, you should ask yourself the following questions: Where is there potential for change? What resources are needed and where can we get them? And what challenges stand in the way of sustainable action?

Sustainable alternatives are often the more costly option so that additional funds are frequently needed, for example to compensate for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from flights. However, there are currently almost no funding institutions that recognise such costs as eligible expenses. In the case of food allowances, the daily rates are often too low to offer organic, fair trade and regional wholefood products. For many people, eco-friendly travel options and public transport are only available to a limited extent. And it is not easy to find event venues that allow people with special support needs to participate.

Such structural constraints make it difficult to act in a consistent and sustainable manner, which is why it is all the more important to work with multiple stakeholders to change these structures and to establish sustainable action as the status quo.

Until then, you need to come up with creative solutions. It is not a question of implementing sustainability considerations in all areas right away, but rather to start somewhere. And if things are a little difficult at the beginning, don't give up! Even raising awareness and highlighting possible courses of action will ensure that educational partnerships and projects produce committed agents of change who will work towards a more ecologically, economically and socially just world. Thanks to their focus on sustainability, international education partnerships and projects can themselves become examples of sustainability in action.

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*In the context of Education for Sustainable Development, we always have to keep in mind a global perspective, otherwise we will miss part of the complexity of the challenges that we are facing. In order to do that, it is essential to engage in social exchange, to learn about common interests, talk about cultural differences and similarities, change paradigms together, deal with prejudices and avoid stereotypes, etc. The use of digital tools can facilitate virtual social exchanges, thereby avoiding the environmental impact of travelling around the world and making intercultural learning accessible to those who cannot afford to travel. This is where two major transformations converge: the great transformation towards sustainability and the digital transformation. It is important to note that the digital transformation was ignored when the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs were agreed in 2015. But in many countries digital technology already plays an important role today. Virtual exchanges like “Feliz Birth Tag” contribute directly on SDG number 17, “revitalising the global partnership for sustainable development”. At the same time, this enables learners to explore how technology can serve the purpose of true justice by trying to reduce inequalities, while developing important skills for dealing with technology, protecting themselves in cyberspace and how to be a good digital citizen.*

**Giovanni Fonseca**

*International Consultant for Education, Sustainability and Digitalisation and member of ESD Expert Net, Germany*



## Overview

# Examples of sustainable project management

## Mobility

Personal encounters lie at the very heart of international education partnerships and projects. Before any trip, however, you should carefully consider what kinds of personal meetings are absolutely necessary. Is it possible to prepare a face-to-face encounter using online tools? Can individual contributions to a conference be incorporated via video messages? If air travel is necessary, you should always book direct flights wherever possible and avoid feeder flights. For domestic travel, you should try to use public transport wherever you can. Should this not be possible, use the services of regional transport providers, such as shared taxis, carpools, etc. You can also offset the CO<sub>2</sub> released during travel with payments to support climate protection projects. However, it is always better to avoid greenhouse emissions than to offset them!

The following organisations offer carbon offsets:

[www.atmosfair.de](http://www.atmosfair.de) | [www.myclimate.org](http://www.myclimate.org) | [www.co2logic.com](http://www.co2logic.com)

## Venues

When looking for a suitable location for events and meetings, you should not only consider accessibility, space and costs, but also various sustainability aspects. These include the energy and water consumption of the venue, the design of buildings and rooms, waste management and the possibility of using organic and fair-trade catering. In addition, you should also check whether the chosen venue ensures the participation of all persons/groups (e.g. in terms of accessibility and diversity, wheelchair-accessible toilets and accommodation, barrier-free arrival and departure, etc.).

## Catering

The production of food naturally involves the consumption of resources. The environmental impact of the use of chemicals and the working conditions of producers and farmers worldwide also need to be taken into account. You can act sustainably by choosing the right kind of food: the production of meat, for example, is much more harmful to the climate than that of vegetables. If meat is offered, it should not come from industrial livestock production. You should focus on short transport routes and the use of regional products. Even in the case of products that cannot be sourced locally, you should ensure that fair and sustainable production conditions are observed. Avoiding packaging and food waste also contributes to greater sustainability.

## Teaching and learning materials

Communication and joint learning can be supported by distributing informative materials at educational events. However, handouts, event documents, flipcharts and presentation cards all consume resources and generate waste. You should therefore carefully consider which copies, printouts and materials are really necessary without compromising the quality of the educational activity. If possible, use 100% recycled paper.



## Social program

For many participants, attending an educational event outside their home town or country is a good opportunity to explore the surrounding area. Restaurant visits or cultural and sightseeing activities can be part of the official programme or take place outside of it. Regardless of whether you or the participants themselves organise these activities, it is worthwhile to check which sites, places of interest, cultural events, cafés and restaurants might be of particular interest from a sustainability perspective. Draw up a list with relevant information that you can also make available to the participants and involve local partners in the design of the supporting programme.

## Diversity aspects

The term diversity management refers to measures for promoting and addressing diversity in relation to ethnic origin or nationality, gender, sexual orientation, ideology, age, disability, social origin, etc. An event that pays attention to the needs of different people points the way forward in terms of sustainable development. Check whether anyone within your educational partnership or project is disadvantaged or excluded due to group affiliations and develop strategies for counteracting this. Use gender-sensitive language and avoid discriminatory wording and stereotypes. If possible, provide information about the events within your educational partnership or project in simple language that can be understood by all target groups. Make sure you have a balanced selection of speakers and invite guests of different ages, genders and origins. Design the event in such a way that it is sensitive to discrimination and does not leave any room for racism and sexism, for example by agreeing on a code of conduct from the outset and providing a contact point for anyone affected by discrimination.

The following sources offer additional information about sustainable event management:

[www.t1p.de/guidelines-sustainable-events](http://www.t1p.de/guidelines-sustainable-events)

Guidelines to prevent harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination:

[www.t1p.de/guidelines-discrimination-sensitive-events](http://www.t1p.de/guidelines-discrimination-sensitive-events)

## 3.8 Complying with data protection rules and personal rights

By Sarah Laustroer

*What needs to be considered with regard to photos or data of others?*

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Issues concerning data protection and personal rights are increasingly gaining public attention. Some of these issues are governed by laws which must be observed, otherwise penalties may be imposed. But even where this is not the case, photos and data of others should be handled with sensitivity and in a responsible manner. Different countries and regions have different laws or practices in place. It is therefore advisable to address these issues in the framework of international education partnerships and projects in order to prevent any violations.

In the EU, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has been in force since 2016. Among other things, it specifies the types and scope of personal data collection, how long the data may be stored and the rights of data subjects. Since the entry into force of the GDPR, advance notice must be given whenever any personal data are collected or photographs are taken. It also needs to be clear what the data will be used for. Advertising may not be sent out without consent, and even where individuals have given their consent to be included in a mailing list or to receive information, every such email must include an opt-out function. Furthermore, when sending an email to several recipients, the email addresses should not be visible to third parties, which can be prevented by using the bcc field, for example.

Sensitivity is also required when it comes to taking or using photographs. Especially when travelling to other countries or participating in special events, many people are eager to capture their impressions, but not everyone likes to be photographed without being asked. Similarly, not every place or moment is suitable for a photo. For example, in some countries it is forbidden to photograph government buildings or underground stations. During ceremonies or rituals, it is always better to observe or to ask in advance whether photographs are permitted. And not everybody will be happy to have their photo shared on websites or social media. In the EU, sharing without consent is actually prohibited under the GDPR.

A concise overview of the General Data Protection Regulation:  
[www.gdpr-info.eu](http://www.gdpr-info.eu)

Finally, data protection should also be taken into account when choosing digital tools for communication, project management and cooperation. The most widely used programme is not always the best in terms of privacy, but if everyone is okay with that, it may still be used. However, if there are any concerns, these should not simply be dismissed. Instead, it is important to find a joint solution.

While some people may perceive data protection as annoying, it is about protecting everyone's personal rights. A joint discussion about this topic can be a valuable exercise that contributes to a more careful management of these rights in the long term.

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Form for photo and film permission for the "Connect for Change" conference.

**VNB**  
Verband Norddeutscher  
Bildungsmittler e.V.  
[Praxis der Weiterbildung]

**Permission to take photos and films**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The VNB e.V. intends to take photos and films within the framework of connect-for-change. The photographs shall be published for documentation and public relations purposes. The publication shall take place for an indefinite time.

It should be noted that photos and films published on the internet may be accessed by any person. In such cases, it cannot be excluded that these persons may continue to use the photos or pass them on to other persons.

This permission is valid from the date of signature until revocation.

I declare my agreement with the publication on the

- Website of the VNB
- Profile page of the VNB e.V. on Facebook
- In printed publications (e.g. annual report, manual Connect for Change)
- I don't agree.

Place, date, signature \_\_\_\_\_



## 3.9 Making use of external advice

By Gabriele Janecki

### *Who can help with the set-up and implementation of a project?*



*Schools can learn a lot from each other, which is why regular exchanges between them are so important. However, such exchanges require organisational support, since it is not only a matter of networking the local schools, but also of involving the partner schools. Appropriate training courses and the involvement of extra-curricular partners are also essential for the further development of such networks.*

**Beatrix Albrecht**  
Lower Saxony Institute for School  
Quality Development, Germany

In international education partnerships and projects, it is often a good idea to arrange for external advice and support. There are a large number of governmental and non-governmental organisations and individuals who are able to provide invaluable assistance in terms of establishing contacts, communicating with partner organisations, dealing with issues of funding and preparing the content and implementation of projects.

If you would like to start an international educational activity, but do not have any contacts of your own with partners in other countries, it is worth looking around your own organisation to see which associations, migrant organisations, schools, churches and local authorities are already working with partners in the Global South. They can pass on their experiences with establishing contacts and may also be able to put you in touch with interested partner organisations. Perhaps the activities you are planning can be linked to existing international partnerships and projects. It is also worth asking around in your municipality.

Experienced advisers from organisations that have been active in the field for a long time can also be extremely helpful when it comes to the general organisation of international education projects and exchange visits. Especially when applying for visas and contacting embassies, taking out insurance and compiling the required travel documents, you can greatly benefit from the tips and experiences of others. Detailed information on visa issues and related topics can be found in Chapter 3.6.

In order for an international education project to fulfil its educational objectives, the participants need to train their ability to practice self-reflection and engage in a change of perspective while addressing global inequalities, (colonial) history and other topics. This can be done through preparatory lessons in school and extracurricular activities, or during project days and excursions as part of international exchanges, supported by Global Learning activities. Experts from public and civil society educational institutions or from development organisations can help with the selection of workshop topics, with finding speakers or with the organisational and educational planning of workshops both before and during a trip, etc.

The implementation and continuation of international educational partnerships and projects depends not only on personal commitment but also on the acquisition of funding. As not everyone who is interested in undertaking such activities is familiar with the

funding landscape and has experience in grant writing, it makes sense to seek the support of experienced applicants and/or advisers, at least for the initial application. Some institutions, such as schools, cannot always act in a flexible manner due to their complex organisational structures, and they are also not always able to apply for funding themselves. Non-governmental organisations can act as facilitators by sharing their experience, entering into cooperation and possibly applying for funding. Detailed information on the funding options can be found in Chapter 3.5.

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*I approached friends from the ESD Expert Net in Germany with the idea of working together with partners from countries of the Global South on an international primary school project. Through contacts within the network, I was able to find partner schools in Ahmadabad, India and in Mexico City. What I found particularly enriching were the diverse ideas and objectives of the project partners, who contributed different perspectives that allowed us to work together on dynamic projects. In the meantime, our school network has expanded to include a school in New Mumbai. All the project work, from finding the right topic to the implementation, takes place through a process of continuous exchange.*

**Sabine Cordes**

*Head Teacher of the Schule am Wingster Wald, Germany*



Many things become easier if we support each other



## Overview

# Points of contact for advice, the establishment of contacts and organisational support

## Examples from Germany

### One World networks at state level

Through their work, One World groups, initiatives and non-governmental organisations promote awareness of global connections. They have joined forces in all of Germany's states to form state-wide One World networks. You can contact them with any questions you may have about South-North partnerships.

[www.agl-einewelt.de/english](http://www.agl-einewelt.de/english)

### One World Promoters

Across Germany, there are 150 One World Promoters who advise and network civil society organisations and initiatives and initiate projects and campaigns for a more sustainable world. Specialist promoters from the field of international cooperation/partnerships provide advice and support in establishing and implementing international partnerships and projects.

[www.einewelt-promotorinnen.de/promotorinnen/](http://www.einewelt-promotorinnen.de/promotorinnen/)

### ENSA school exchange programme in the field of development work

ENSA is Engagement Global's school exchange programme in the field of development work. ENSA offers substantive and financial support for partnerships between schools from Germany and countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and South-East Europe. In addition, ENSA also organises training and networking events for schools and associations.

[www.ensa.engagement-global.de](http://www.ensa.engagement-global.de)

### Partnerschulnetz.de

Partnerschulnetz.de is a virtual partnership exchange developed within the framework of the German Foreign Office initiative "Schools: Partners of the Future". It enables schools worldwide to search for a partner school in another country.

[www.partnerschulnetz.de/en/](http://www.partnerschulnetz.de/en/)

### Church organisations

Many church organisations such as Brot für die Welt, the Catholic Fund or missionary organisations provide support for youth groups, individual parishes, One World associations and institutions, educators and other development actors in designing and applying for exchange programmes in the field of development cooperation.

[www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de](http://www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de) | [www.misereor.de](http://www.misereor.de) | [www.missio.de](http://www.missio.de) | [www.adveniat.de](http://www.adveniat.de)



## Overview

# Points of contact and information resources for Global Learning

### Learn2Change – Global Network of Educational Activists

“Learn2Change – Global Network of Educational Activists” brings together education activists from around the world. It promotes exchanges of ideas, as well as the advancement and implementation of new learning approaches for social transformation. Experts from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America are available on many topics related to Global Learning.

[www.learn2change-network.org](http://www.learn2change-network.org)

### ESD Expert Net

The ESD Expert Net brings together experts from Germany, India, Mexico and South Africa in a global partnership. Driven by a common vision of Education for Sustainable Development, members from a wide range of institutions work on the implementation of sustainability in the educational system of each partner country.

[www.esd-expert.net](http://www.esd-expert.net)

### Bildung trifft Entwicklung – regional education centres

The regional education centres of the “Bildung trifft Entwicklung” (“Education Meets Development”) programme arrange for lecturers on Global Learning and provide teaching materials for conducting educational events on development issues. They also offer advice on content and teaching methods as well as training courses.

[www.bildung-trifft-entwicklung.de/regionale-bildungsstellen.html](http://www.bildung-trifft-entwicklung.de/regionale-bildungsstellen.html)

### The “Global Development in Schools” programme

The school programme of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) aims to embed the orientation framework for global development in the curriculum. In cooperation with the ministries of education of the German states, coordinators are available at state level who can also provide advice on the possible content of school partnerships.

[www.ges.engagement-global.de](http://www.ges.engagement-global.de)

### The Global Learning portals of EWIK and the World University Services

Via their respective Global Learning portals, both the “Eine-Welt-Internet-Konferenz” (“One World Internet Conference”, EWIK) and the World University Service provide educational materials, methodologies, speaker referrals and counselling services for school development as well as materials on school partnerships:

[www.globaleslernen.de/de/search/node/schulpartnerschaft](http://www.globaleslernen.de/de/search/node/schulpartnerschaft)

[www.wusgermany.de/de/globales-lernen](http://www.wusgermany.de/de/globales-lernen)



## Overview

# Advice and support facilities that are specific to Lower Saxony

## Association of Lower Saxony Education Initiatives (VNB)

VNB is an umbrella organisation for adult education in Lower Saxony. It supports educational organisations and civil society initiatives in terms of content, organisation and funding and carries out educational projects in cooperation with them, for example in the fields of Global Learning and Education for Sustainable Development.

[www.vnb.de](http://www.vnb.de)

## Globo:log

In addition to general information on Global Learning, the globo:log information portal also contains a database with educational offers and materials from non-school providers in Bremen and Lower Saxony. This enables teachers and educators to quickly identify potential guest speakers for a given topic.

[www.globolog.net](http://www.globolog.net)

## Association for Development Policy (VEN)

Through its Global Learning Office, VEN supports associations, initiatives and all those interested in the topic from across Lower Saxony. The office provides advice on the design, reflection and further development of educational work in this field.

[www.ven-nds.de/projekte/globales-lernen](http://www.ven-nds.de/projekte/globales-lernen)

The Migration and Development Office aims to integrate the diverse experience and knowledge of migrant organisations into the development activities of civil society and government actors in Lower Saxony.

[www.ven-nds.de/projekte/migration-und-entwicklung](http://www.ven-nds.de/projekte/migration-und-entwicklung)

## Peer Leader International

Peer Leader International (PLI) is an international youth network with partner groups in many different countries. PLI works on the basis of the peer education concept and collaborates with schools and other institutions, especially in the field of youth participation and international educational projects.

[www.peerleader.org](http://www.peerleader.org)



## **IP1 – Initiativen Partnerschaft Eine Welt**

“IP1 – Initiativen Partnerschaft Eine Welt” (“IP1 – One World Partnership Initiatives”) aims to support and strengthen global partnerships between schools in Lower Saxony and educational institutions and communities in countries of the Global South, with a view to facilitating long-term cooperation, exchanges of ideas and experiences and the launch of new projects.

[www.initiativen-partnerschaft.de](http://www.initiativen-partnerschaft.de)

## **Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Lower Saxony Institute for Quality Development in Schools (NLQ)**

The Lower Saxony Ministry of Culture and Education and the Lower Saxony Institute for School Quality Development offer support, advice and further training for schools that take part in or wish to establish school partnerships.

[www.nibis.de/schulpartnerschaften\\_9069](http://www.nibis.de/schulpartnerschaften_9069)

## **Youth Action Nature and Environmental Protection Lower Saxony - JANUN e. V.**

JANUN is a network with many committed people and a wide range of topics and activities for young people up to 27 years old. JANUN sensitizes young people for ecological and social issues and shows possible courses of action at the political and individual level. JANUN also conducts and advises on international educational projects and partnerships.

[www.janun.de](http://www.janun.de)

## **Lutheran Mission in Lower Saxony - ELM Hermannsburg**

ELM Hermannsburg works for a strong worldwide cooperation in a network of 23 Protestant churches in 19 countries on four continents. It has many experiences with parishes in partnership projects, accompanies international voluntary services, offers seminars of Global Learning and organizes diverse North-South encounters.

[www.elm-mission.net](http://www.elm-mission.net)



Partners from Blantyre and Hannover present their work.



### Multi-level partnership

## aware&fair. Exchange and learning about sustainability

Freundeskreis Malawi and Städtepartnerschaft Hannover-Blantyre e. V., aware&fair e. V. Hannover, aware&fair Club Blantyre, City of Hannover, City of Blantyre

The partnership between Blantyre and Hannover, which began in 1968, was initially promoted by the association „Freundeskreis Zentral- und Ostafrika“ (Friends of Central and East Africa). In 2010, on the initiative of Silvia Hesse, the then head of the Agenda21 office of the City of Hannover, the association was renamed to “Freundeskreis Malawi und Städtepartnerschaft Hannover-Blantyre” (Friends of Malawi and of the city partnership Hannover-Blantyre) in order to focus specifically on Malawi. Silvia Hesse was inspired by the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals to develop an EU project called aware&fair with partners from Malawi, Hannover, Hannover’s Polish twin city Poznan and other Eastern European cities, with the aim of promoting exchanges in the fields of culture, health, environment, climate protection, education and fair trade. This project served as the basis for the establishment of the aware&fair association in Hannover (founded by Silvia Hesse) and the aware&fair Club in Blantyre (initiated by Louis Zulu).

Since then, Louis Zulu, Ruth Kaperemera and Evelyn Siti have been in charge of the aware&fair activities in primary and secondary schools of Blantyre. The Freundeskreis Malawi initiates and coordinates projects with other associations and organisations and supports the partnership between Hannover and Blantyre. Local cultural institutions, political leaders, other NGOs and schools have participated in the many projects that we have so far organised. In our partnership, learning takes place in many different ways. At the local level, we learn from each other through personal discussions and regular meetings. We also learn by organising small projects at school level, such as tree planting initiatives, urban agriculture programmes and workshops on fair trade and sustainability. At the international level, we learn from each other by participating in international conferences, festivals and seminars. At home, we share new ideas and skills and put them into practice for the benefit of others.

Above all, we learn through club activities such as theatre, poetry, musical and dance performances, as well as through quizzes, workshops and international exchanges. One example is the theatre project „Fair Culture – The World of Tomorrow“, which was organized as part of the European aware&fair project under the leadership of the Staatstheater Hannover. In different ways, theatre productions from Malawi, Poland, Germany, Ghana and Palestine drew attention to the challenges that we have to face together. At the same time, these performances helped us to get to know and understand other points of view. Our partnership tries to contribute to an environmentally and globally just world through various local and international initiatives. For example, eight members of the aware&fair Club at Njamba Secondary School, where Louis and Evelyn teach, took part in a global bicycle tour that started in Germany and then led them through Ukraine, Malawi, the Republic of South Africa and Bosnia. They cycled from Blantyre to the Mangochi Lake District, a distance of 200 km. On the way, they talked to more than 500 young people about what climate change means for them, what causes it, how it has affected them in locally and how its negative effects can be mitigated.

In the Blantyre schools, students try to contribute to an environmentally sustainable world through annual tree planting drives and by raising awareness about how to properly dispose of school and domestic waste. At school level, we are trying to tackle the problem of plastics pollution by promoting good practices for reducing, reusing and recycling waste. The aim of aware&fair Hannover is to network the partnership activities in other countries, for example in Colombia. Based on the example of Blantyre, we would also like to establish aware&fair clubs in schools in Hannover. Our collective plans for the future are many and varied. We need continuity and consistency and strive to build more partnerships to exchange good practices in education for sustainable development and environmental protection in order to create a more just and fair world.



Coordinators of the Partnership between Blantyre and Hannover



[www.freundeskreis-malawi.de](http://www.freundeskreis-malawi.de)

”

### ***All we need to make global educational partnerships at its best***



*All we need is forest.  
We need good air to fascinate our care.  
Mother Earth must be coated with a better seasons bliss  
To foster our livity.  
We need better forest to abolish desertification.*

*All we desire is resilient infrastructure,  
Sustainable industrialization and quality innovation.  
Schools must have biggest rooms and play rooms for kids.  
Our societies must mix activities inclusively  
As we create a conducive atmosphere to live.  
Teachers should have plenty of time to organise plays and lessons  
in a creative way.*

*All we deserve is justice to all of us.  
We build effective and inclusive institutions in all the spheres.  
We need formal wisdom for everyone.  
Where it is taken from quality education.  
Equality and equity is what we are thriving for.  
Where a woman and a child are considered as human beings.*

*All we need is to eradicate poverty  
As we all belong to mother planet earth.  
We need to conserve our livity  
So that the environment is supporting us happily.  
We need clean substance to have good healthy  
As we are quenching our thirsty.  
We live harmoniously as water as we cherish global partnership.*

***Ruth Kapelemera***

*Teacher at the Stella Maris Secondary School, Malawi*

# 4 THE NEXT STEPS INTO THE FUTURE



## Reflection, further development and consolidation

Projects typically begin with many expectations, desires, great plans and euphoria. And this is a good thing, since motivation is greatly nourished by our dreams as well as the opportunities to realize them. A great deal of commitment and work is invested in preparing and carrying out various activities. The “day-to-day running” of the project quickly takes precedence and common experiences occupy centre stage. It is worthwhile to take a break every now and then, though, in order to contemplate the partnership, as well as the project itself, as a whole. It is important to pose questions with regard to the basic direction being taken and the collaborative work to be performed. A good motto for this is: “Dig deeper still and expand the circle to include new people, and enhance inspiration”. Part of this involves seeking and developing new methods to evaluate what works well and to identify problems and challenges. However, this also involves finding ways to keep the project or the partnership alive in the future as well. Alongside these points, this chapter serves as a kind of summary and conclusion of the Handbook. You can find, in the form of a checklist, Conditions of Success for Global Cooperation in Education.

## 4.1 Making active use of the evaluation

By Sören Barge

*What opportunities exist to reflect upon one's own work?*

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In the course of global educational cooperation, more and more basic questions are being raised: What are we trying to achieve? What effects do the activities have on the participants and the environment? What gives us reason to be proud, what things are working and providing satisfaction to all project partners? What things could be or ought to be changed?

In project management, these are all questions posed in connection with evaluation, in which the results, the consequences and the effects of the work constitute the central focus. This "questioning" with regard to the project or the partnership can take place at specific intervals, in accordance with a self-imposed right of election. Often, more extensive workshops are carried out at the conclusion of a visiting trip or following the creation of a collective product (product evaluation). This way, one acquires ideas as well as suggestions for improvement for subsequent activities. However, this "questioning" can be integrated into the day-to-day management of the project on an ongoing basis, e.g. by means of the regular collection of observations as well as the recording of discussions regarding these ideas (procedural evaluation). This permits changes to be made while the work is underway.

A practical guideline with many methods for reflection within the meaning of transformative learning:  
[www.t1p.de/reflection-methods](http://www.t1p.de/reflection-methods)

At the "Connect for Change" conference, the peer coaching method was implemented, according to which ideas and perspectives were collected in cooperative fashion with regard to an individual case:  
[www.t1p.de/handout-peercoaching](http://www.t1p.de/handout-peercoaching)

In the classic sense, evaluation serves to verify target achievement. This is particularly important for funding institutions, which must be provided with evidence of results in order for public funding support to be secured, for example. Have the previously set goals been achieved with the measures? How have the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of the target group (e.g. pupils and students) changed? What works particularly well? What doesn't work? However, an evaluation should not be misconstrued as a mere grading of the work (or even as a grading comparison of the work performed by the partners). There is also the risk of performing a mere quantitative evaluation. Such results, expressed only in figures e.g. by means of the use and evaluation of surveys with assessment scales, provide us with a useful initial picture, but they do not permit an immersive approach to the complex system of interrelationships. Also, the assumption that a particular action will engender particular effects is overly simplistic. Rather, the reinforced and sustainable behaviour of participants is influenced, for example, by a most diverse array of influences. For this reason, an evaluation should employ qualitative and creative methods to gather the perspectives of the participants as well as inferences and conclusions regarding the collaborative work. It thereby becomes an important tool for mutual understanding: Honest feedback provided in respectful fashion among participants, together with

the common identification of problems and the endeavour to develop good practice constitute important pillars for long-term partnership.

### Developing a critical viewpoint together

The focus of an evaluation can be entirely different: It is precisely in the area of educational activities that the matter of how and what the participants have discovered, experienced and leaned becomes interesting on a contentual level. A critical approach to organization, structural anchoring, cooperation or division of roles and responsibilities can also be a source of great fascination in the context of partnerships. For this reason, the participants should make arrangements in advance and make decisions regarding common evaluation requirements. In the best case scenario, this is already contemplated and planned as common objectives are formulated (chapter 2.2), with the result that participants on all sides are aware as to what standards are applied. A further understanding of evaluation contributes to future learning inasmuch as it permits common reflection regarding the experiences gathered during the course of the partnership or project. However, if standards are unilaterally imposed and subsequently verified without dialogue, then this can potentially lead to a breakdown in shared communication and, consequently, an uncertain future as far as cooperation is concerned.

Moreover, a distinction can be made between self-evaluation and outside evaluation: With regard to the former, the participants attempt to reflect upon their work themselves using various methods. In the latter version, other, non-participants (e.g. consultants, scientists, funding institutions) are asked to assume this role. Both can lead to blind spots.

Perhaps the participants already have a solid perspective regarding the partnership in their heads which they no longer take time to question. Non-participants, on the other hand, are often not quite so immersed in the project, and therefore only scratch the surface with their observations. Roles often vary as well: It is possible that when conducting a self-evaluation, criticism of one's own work or that of the partner is often less pronounced. As outsiders in relation to the partnership, non-participants can develop an impartial view and thereby better identify problems occurring during work as well as conflicts which arise among participants. However, this only makes sense if the partners are ready, in turn, to share and come to terms with their criticisms. It is at this point that the distinction between evaluation and consultation or mediation becomes fluid. This is offered, in part, by several of the participants listed in chapter 3.7. What all of these forms possess in common, however, is that they further enhance global education partnership as well as projects, and seek to establish them on the basis of common knowledge and understanding.



*When advising committed individuals in international project work, the impact of their plans is often a topic. It is one thing to find the measures and methods for the self-defined goals, but it is another to find the appropriate instruments to measure the achievement of the goals. Fortunately, there are some well-implemented and proven tools that check whether and with what effort the project goals are achieved. This helps to identify difficulties in the project at an early stage and ensures the quality of the project.*

**Mana Atiglo**

*One World Promotor  
for Migration and Development,  
Association for Development  
Policy, Lower Saxony, Germany*

## Method

# Journal - Acquired skills for reflection and contemplation

**Aim:** A visit was held during which the partners recorded and, together, reflected upon the effects among the participants, and carried out modifications to the programme where necessary.

**Duration:** 20 minutes daily, reflective discussions 90 minutes each

**Participants:** up to 20

**Materials:** one notebook and one writing utensil (pen or pencil) per participant; large sheets of paper and marker for the reflective discussions.

**Procedure:** All participants were asked to note down their personal learning experiences at the end of every day during a visit at the partners. In addition, it is possible to agree in advance with regard to categories or questions: e.g. What am I curious about? How was I able to participate today? What did I bring to the table? What new things did I encounter today? What did I take with me? What did I not understand? What would I like to consider further?

In the course of a reflective discussion with as many participants as possible, following approximately three days, each participant is asked to share something from one of the categories in his or her learning diary with the others. Statements can be gathered and arranged as quotes on a large sheet of paper. In accordance with a procedure-oriented self-evaluation, the participants can now consider the effects of the visit has had on them as well as what things require reinforcement or modification. The quotes may be used further for subsequent evaluations or project reports (anonymously, if necessary).

An additional alternative would be to further distribute the learning diaries or exchange them and to provide reactions in writing to the contributions of the others. This way, dialogue and interaction can be further encouraged.





## Method

# HEADS-UP – Rendering roles and structures visible

**Aim:** Participants reflect upon their project or partnership in consideration of a critical Global Citizenship Education

**Duration:** 90 min

**Participants:** up to 15

**Materials:** Face-to-face workshop: Laptop, projector, internet access, paper, writing utensil (pen or pencil);

Online: Technology and internet access for all, video conference program with online cooperation tool.

**Procedure:** The basis for reflection is the video created for the “Connect for Change” conference by Prof. Dr. Vanessa Andreotti, Department for Educational Sciences of the University of British Columbia in Canada ([www.t1p.de/keynote-andreotti](http://www.t1p.de/keynote-andreotti)). In this video, she argues in favour of an historic critical perspective regarding global (educational) partnerships which is sensitive to discrimination. In particular, the verification of one’s own work using the HEADS UP tools has proved suitable for substantive reflection. All participants watch the video together. A printable written summary may be found here: [www.t1p.de/handout-andreotti](http://www.t1p.de/handout-andreotti). Subsequently, the participants take their positions, either in a real environment, on an imaginary scale from one to ten on the floor, or in a virtual environment, in an online cooperation tool: How powerfully have each of the 7 HEADS UP dimensions become imprinted on our partnership? In the real environment, a sociographic listing results for each of the dimensions, one after the other. Here, the participants may be questioned regarding their perspectives, and critical points as well as any brand new ideas regarding change may be gathered. In the virtual space, the results of the coordination should be visible for all and a written comments function should make it possible to submit entries.

In doing so, what is important to remember is that inequitable structures sometimes come to exist unintentionally, and that these can be difficult to penetrate. At this juncture, however, the first and most important step is to become consciously aware of such structures.

- 
- H** egemonic practices (reinforcing and justifying the status quo)
  - E** thnocentric projections (presenting one view as universal and superior)
  - A** historical thinking (forgetting the role of historical legacies and complexities in shaping current problems)
  - D** epoliticized orientations (disregarding the impacts of power imbalances and delegitimizing dissent)
  - S** elf-serving motivations (invested in self-congratulatory heroism)
  - 
  - U** n-complicated solutions (offering ‘feel-good’ quick fixes that do not address root causes of problems)
  - P** aternalistic investments (seeking a ‘thank you’ from those who have been ‘helped’)



Participants of the conference are networking



International youth-led conference

## Our Common Future – Countdown 2030, 2063 & Beyond

Engagement Global, African-German Youth Initiative, GIZ African Union, NEGO-COM (Benin), WESSA (Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa), bridge-it! e. V. (Germany)

The international youth-led conference “Our Common Future - Countdown 2030, 2063 and Beyond” which gathered 120 young people from 22 countries on five continents took place in Cologne, Germany from 2-6 december 2019. Organised by the International Youth Committee (IYC), which consisted of three regional teams from Germany, francophone Africa and the Southern African Development Community, the conference aimed to bring together young people from the Global North (mainly Germany) and the Global South to share their visions and priorities, both locally and globally in the context of the SDGs and the African Union’s Agenda 2063.

The conference was organized by several partner organizations from different countries. In the following we, NiNa Reichert, bridge-it! program director, and Dambisa Dube, consultant of the GIZ DAJ, reflect on how this particular constellation opened transformative learning spaces.

For all involved, the project's setup was a huge opportunity to dive into the unknown. Power, beauty and mutual trust grew in the individual, regional and international learning spaces that we co-created and supported. What we found both remarkable was the challenging intensity of shape-shifting happening at all levels, inviting us to surrender to this continuous transformation and to hold space for the youth teams' emerging ideas, while focussing on the frameworks that we deemed necessary for this purpose.

The first focal learning in this process was how to generate a collective energy and benefit from it. The constant cultivation of an Ubuntu spirit laid a strong common ground for all collaborations including those at IYC level which prior to the conference took place exclusively in a virtual space. This spirit then trickled down to the event in an organic manner as a joint basis for all participants.

Our second focal learning was how to stimulate constant self-reflection. By providing the necessary tools and a space for this to happen as part of the conference planning framework, it was possible for a (self)critical feedback culture to evolve. We also introduced an anti-bias perspective from the beginning by using the Respect Guide as the basis of our teamwork. Later on, the IYC decided to also use it for the conference, introducing a Feelgood Team accompanied by self-reflection questions every afternoon.

The third focal learning crystallised around the concept of "youth-led activities" and the various ways in which our project embodied this. We found that intergenerational exchanges of experiences are important in this kind of setting because they informed youth-led decision-making in a generative and constructive manner and allowed us to reflect on the associated power dynamics.

As we reflected on the post-conference processes, we identified a 4th focal learning. It can be described as a specific *Countdown spirit* that was born at the conference and has grown amongst the participants. This *spirit* has allowed each individual to benefit, beyond the event itself, from the personal connections, the diversity of ideas, the team *spirit* and the learnings to be drawn. It motivates the participants to stay in touch in order to build partnership and nourish an international youth activist network.

These focal learnings have reshaped our understanding of sustainability. We found interconnectedness at the heart of this concept, which is reflected in the word itself: sUStainability. We understand this "US" as a living practice that enables different experiences and processes of un-learning and thus questions dominant ways of being and knowledge.

[www.countdown2030.net](http://www.countdown2030.net)

This perspective is inspired by the work of the "Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures Collective" and the book "**Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds**" by adrienne maree brown.

Ubuntu taken from ubuntu ngumuntu ngabantu which means **'I am because you are'**. It encourages a sense of community and has been one of the many mantras that have shaped South Africa's democracy. For further reading we recommend Mungi Ngomane's book *Everyday Ubuntu*.

The Respect Guide can be downloaded for free in English, French, German:  
<http://www.i-paed-berlin.de/de/Downloads/>



IYC members preparing welcome package for the conference

## 4.2 Passing on responsibility

By Sören Barge

*How can the project or the partnership be assured for the future?*

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If collaborative learning regarding global issues and engagement in favour of a just and sustainable world is to be successful, it shall require motivated organizers as described in this handbook. If international cooperation has already been initiated, then it is often influenced and maintained by those engaged from the very start. These people are aware of the history, the details as well as the unwritten laws of the partnership or the projects. Use must be made of this wealth of experience for as long as possible. Stable partnerships can be formed and further developed for years by the same people. Nevertheless, there also exist many examples that show how this oftentimes does not work. If these people remain alone, then the project, as large and extensive as it may be begun, grows ever less significant with time. Structures which have been erected and established in painstaking and meticulous fashion shall no longer be implemented, and shall continue to exist only "on paper", and shall be forgotten and, eventually, disappear. This must be prevented ahead of time. What is most necessary under these circumstances is to refrain from adhering to the old structures, and instead to make place for new impulses and the ideas of others, thereby allowing the partnership to develop further. This is because if they are to remain alive, it makes a lot of sense to integrate more and more different people into the plans, procedures and relations early on, and on a continuous basis. These can be new colleagues, members of other associations or people from the project environment. Or, that can be people from other organizations, people from the civil society or active school graduates who wish to participate in new roles. Make it your objective to seek out these people and offer them the opportunity to participate on a cooperative and responsible basis. Here, the essential elements of participative learning space (chapter 3.3) is a good prerequisite. Document your work and keep track of connections and details, so that you will be able to pass this knowledge on to new interested parties in the most concrete fashion possible. In the best case scenario, a new generation of active individuals will emerge who will introduce their own ideas and implement activities, keeping educational cooperation alive in the process. Perhaps this will result in the development of a kind of mentoring relationship: It is true that new people learn from the old timers, but they have the leeway to engage in formation themselves as well as to celebrate success and to make mistakes. If required, they can seek advice or simply think back to old times. This is because every instance of global educational cooperation results in the writing of a new chapter in world history, in which the basic components of justice, human rights, international understanding, peace and a good life receive active representation on behalf of all.



”

*When I joined the German Exchange Programme at Gelvandale High School it had already been in existence for a number of years. Agreeing to accompany students to Oldenburg, Germany, led to a great change in my life and in the lives of my colleagues and students. The continued success of the German Exchange Programme depends on the extent to which change is successfully implemented. We must bring in passionate and willing teachers so that new ideas may be introduced and the German Exchange Programme directed to new heights.*

**Wesley Blignaut**

*Teacher at the Willow Academy, South Africa*



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*My colleague and I have been asking ourselves again and again: How will the partnership continue when we are no longer around? For this reason, we have attempted to anchor our partnership into the school's structures as early on as possible: It must appear in the mission statement, regular reports must take place during school conferences, the school board must be included in the decision-making process and a post of special responsibility must be created for the internationalization of the school, pursuant to which more and more new colleagues must be included in activities, in particular if the partners are visiting the school and collaborative learning is underway. Only then can supporters, activists and companions be won. This is our hope - since this is what we have striven for, knowing all the while that it would eventually come!*

**Ute Wittenberg**

*Studies Director (retired), Chairperson of the One World Partnerships Initiative Association, Germany*



The dialogue between generations is decisive with regard to future sustainability.



A partnership between two non-governmental organisations

## Out of the box – youth exchange in shared responsibility

Partner\*innen über Grenzen (Partners Across Borders, PüG), Bremen, Germany and Mathare Youth Film Festival (MYFF), Nairobi, Kenya

The programme “out of the box” gives young people in Kenya and Germany the chance to look beyond their own horizons through bilateral exchanges. These youth exchanges have been regularly taking place since 2016. Each exchange visit is organised jointly by one group leader from Kenya and one from Germany. In addition, the team also consists of former participants from Kenya and Germany who can apply and qualify to become team trainers. If possible, grant applications are drafted together, which strengthens the team spirit among the participants. The grant application and accounting process is handled in Germany, while the hosts are responsible for the financial administration of the exchange visits, where possible.

Each youth exchange is based on an overarching theme from the field of global development, which the participants from both countries select in advance during a video conference call.

Past topics include climate protection, global poverty and the calls for an end to capitalism. In both countries, the participants take part in preparatory sessions, which includes work on the agreed topic as well as sensitisation training to prepare them for the encounter with peers from completely different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. During the first few days of the exchange visit, the participants present the results of their preparatory work on the topic to each other.

Each exchange programme consists of one encounter in Kenya and one in Germany. During the encounters, the participants work in small teams as well as in one large group. The aim is to make sure that they meet on equal terms, that they constantly change their perspectives and that they are open to new approaches and criticism. The participants do almost everything together and help to determine the rules and the programme of the encounter. Every day, they meet to reflect in three different formats: as one big group, by country and by gender. These sessions not only allow them to discuss what they have experienced so far and what lies ahead, but also to sort out any problems or misunderstandings. On the one hand, this participatory approach based on the thorough reflection of the participants' own experiences contributes to a high degree of identification with the project, and on the other it supports the development of skills such as self-efficacy, empathy, teamwork and conflict management.

Between the two encounters, the groups keep in touch with each other and work on a common project. Finally, they evaluate the entire project together and make plans for the future. Two to four weeks later, the participants again reflect on the project in the respective country groups in Kenya and Germany. This also includes information about how they can stay involved in the context of the programme and the respective organisations, to ensure that the encounters and the related experiences have a multiplier effect.

Apart from the group encounters, individual stays in Kenya or Germany are also possible. For example, since 2018 PüG has been able to offer a one-year stay in Bremen for one volunteer from among the former Kenyan participants. The aim is also to have MYFF recognised as a placement agency for German volunteers. Until then, PüG volunteers have the option of a self-financed stay of varying duration with the Kenyan partner organisation. In the future, both organisations plan to continue and further develop the exchange programme. In addition, MYFF and PüG also envisage the joint production of a film.

[www.partner-ueber-grenzen.de/](http://www.partner-ueber-grenzen.de/)  
[www.myffworldwide.weebly.com/](http://www.myffworldwide.weebly.com/)



Teambuilding during the Youth Exchange 2019



Shooting of a music video in Nairobi, Mathare. Music and text created during the Youth Exchange 2019.

## 4.3 Checklist: Bear in mind the conditions required for success

The handbook comprises various aspects of collaborative global educational cooperation and provides rankings, notes, ideas, practical tips and useful examples. These are based on the experiences and perspectives of many activists in the Global North (in particular from Lower Saxony) and in the Global South. At the collaborative conference, within the global dialogue engaged in by education activists and in many partnerships and projects, several central conditions for the success of this cooperation have come to the fore. They have been summarized in a checklist appearing in this last chapter of the handbook. Of course, they are neither conclusive nor complete, but they provide an opportunity to become oriented and may be used to engage in consideration and evaluation of one's own work. You can find more precise examples regarding implementation and settings in the chapters mentioned in the handbook. The following are important in this context: The conditions are deliberately formulated in very absolute fashion, thus representing an ideal situation. In reality, each partnership or each project shall have implemented a great deal with regard to several aspects, while challenges may be recognized in other areas. This corresponds to the basic premises expressed in the handbook, according to which collaborative learning never ceases.

### Underlying principles

Historical developments, especially colonialism, are thematised as formative for current global structures and power relations, critically reflected and taken into account in planning.

Chapter  
1.1 | 2.2

A combined effort is made to seek ways to achieve a sustainable and just world. Societal participation in a global, as well as local, transformation is an important objective.

Chapter  
1.2 | 3.3

Learning is understood as a process in which diverse perspectives, opportunities and responses are collectively sought.

Chapter  
1.2 | 2.3



## Structural anchoring

Within educational organizations/schools, there exist firmly established teams consisting of several persons from different groups/functions who are collectively responsible for planning, implementation and reflection.

Chapter  
2.1 | 3.2 | 4.2

The partnership or the project is structurally anchored in these organizations. Its executive managers provide it with support and possess joint responsibility with regard thereto.

Chapter  
2.1 | 3.2 | 4.2

The organizations provide resources and free space (e.g. financial resources, venues, personnel, working hours, teaching time or contacts).

Chapter  
3.2 | 3.5

Issues associated with global educational cooperation are actively incorporated into activities, instruction and the further development of the organizations or schools involved.

Chapter  
3.2 | 3.7

Within the local environment, the partnership or the project receives support from official bodies (e.g. Mayor or Chief), societal actors (e.g. local associations, local business), family members (e.g. parents of students) and friends.

Chapter  
2.1 | 3.2

## Relationship between partner organizations and schools

A partner organization/school is selected on the basis of common characteristics, shared questioning and mutual interests.

Chapter  
2.1

The focus is on learning from one another. A hierarchical relationship between the givers and the takers (associated, in particular, with donations) is reflected upon critically and avoided.

Chapter  
2.1 | 2.2

Diversity is valued. The way of life as well as the perspectives and actions of the partners are respected and accepted.

Chapter  
2.2

Those involved and the environment are made aware of stereotypes. Simplistic views, generalizations, prejudices and Eurocentrism are reflected upon critically and actively avoided.

Chapter  
2.2

Various roles and privileges of the partners, both desired and undesired, and the power relationships that exist among them are jointly reflected upon. Conflicts are dealt with using a respectful approach.

Chapter |  
2.2

The participants engage with confidence in an exchange regarding the underlying values and objectives of the collaborative work.

Chapter  
2.2

## Working together

Questions and issues are developed in collaborative fashion. All participants can have an impact on the project during its progression.	Chapter 2.3   3.3
Challenges, risks and unanticipated results of action are identified and dealt with on a collaborative basis.	Chapter 2.3   4.1
Transparent plans and agreements are created and reduced to writing. All participants are informed regarding the status of the plans on an ongoing basis.	Chapter 2.3
Collective responsibility is assumed with regard to activities and roles are distributed in accordance with opportunity, skills and capabilities.	Chapter 2.3   3.1
The partners establish channels of communication which they use to submit requests and receive responses.	Chapter 2.3
The activities are interesting for all partners as well as for the treatment of issues and questions. Meetings offer diverse opportunities for learning and cooperation.	Chapter 2.3   3.1
Opportunities are provided for independent, autonomous learning and engagement on the part of all participants, in particular through the creation of participative learning spaces.	Chapter 2.3   3.3
Young people, in particular, assume responsibility for the collaborative work and can participate extensively.	Chapter 3.2   3.3
The project or partnership is presented to the public. This is done in a discrimination-sensitive manner and with the cooperation of all partners.	Chapter 3.4
All participants adhere to official regulations regarding the protection of personal information and deal cautiously with personal rights.	Chapter 3.8
The partnership or the project is evaluated, consolidated and developed further with time and patience (in particular between personal meetings).	Chapter 4.1   4.2

## Resources and organization

The costs of the activities are calculated on a realistic basis and can be financed. All partner organizations are involved in the financing process.

Chapter  
3.5

All partners have access to technology which will permit them to implement the agreed (digital) communication as well as the exchange.

Chapter  
2.3 | 3.1

Where travel is required, entry requirements are actively considered and observed by both sides. Required documents are obtained or prepared on a collaborative basis.

Chapter  
3.6

The participants receive advice and support from persons who already possess experience with global learning in international partnerships and projects.

Chapter  
3.9

In all areas (e.g. mobility, diversity, event management,...), criteria for sustainability are considered and observed.

Chapter  
3.7

The collaborative work is documented, so that it may be passed on to additional interested parties. New generations of activists, who continue the collaborative work on a long-term basis, receive active support.

Chapter  
4.2

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***If our dreams don't scare us,  
we did not dream big enough!***



*Novy: Hi Wes, how are you?*

*Wes: Great! A bit tired but feeling in the clouds. We just shut down the last prison in the city.*

*Novy: Wow! That's the best news ever!!!!*

*Wes: We are turning it now in a community center with a vegetable garden.*

*Novy: Super! The school partnership really worked very well.*

*Wes: Yes, the community really took ownership of the project.*

*Novy: Aunt Polly bragged with her big harvest of vegetables this year.*

*Wes: Did you hear about the vegetable garden competition that will be hosted by our neighboring school?*

*Novy: That is wonderful!*

*Wes: And that is not all, did you hear about Lance, our new Mayor?*

*Novy: No, what's about him?*

*Wes: Do you remember the filthy fields around our city?*

*Novy: Oh my word, who can forget about that?*

*Wes: Well, the municipality is creating recreational facilities for people to enjoy themselves, with play areas for children and exercise facilities for the sporty ones*

*Novy: Aaaaahhhhhh.... A peaceful and clean environment for people to enjoy themselves. No more hungry people in our city and everyone is prospering. That is so amazing!*

*Wes: To think, this idea started with a small partnership with a school in Germany.*

*Novy: Wow.... People really changed their attitude and their respect for themselves, each other and the environment.*

*Wes: Yes, and Lance is smiling all the way because the city has been nominated for a big award.*

*Novy: The cleanest and greenest city, an example to other cities in South Africa.*

*Wes: I spoke to him yesterday and he told me that he is going to mention us and our partnership in his speech. What an accolade: From NOTHING to SOMETHING.*

*Novy: If your dreams don't scare you, they are not big enough.*

***Novelletta and Wesley Blignaut***

*Teachers in Port Elizabeth, South Africa*



## connect for change

Shaping global education partnerships  
and projects for change

Global educational dialogue for the change towards a sustainable world – this is what people from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America focused on while working together on the project “Connect for Change”. They exchanged views on how educational partnerships and projects can be designed to contribute to greater engagement and solidarity. The participants included young people, teachers, as well as representatives from civil society, educational institutions and public authorities. Through workshops, project visits and an international conference they observed, experimented and discussed the challenges and preconditions for success. In doing so, they exchanged experiences about their own practice, critically reflected on their own roles and positions, and motivated and inspired each other in the further development of their work. In this process, they repeatedly addressed today’s global power imbalances (and their historical roots).

This handbook is based on the results of this dialogue. It contains introductions to various topics, examples of good practice, commentary from engaged individuals from many countries, methodologies, as well as collections of links, other materials and useful tips. The handbook serves as a source of inspiration and guidance for the establishment, design and further development of global education partnerships and projects in schools and civil society.

