

transfer

INFORMATION FOR PROFESSIONALS REPATRIATING
FROM DEVELOPMENT AND CIVIL PEACE SERVICE

Working as a Consultant



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A dream job –
50% education and
training officer and
50% consultancy

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Editorial

Dear readers,

Several months have passed since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. The spread of the virus is hitting some countries of the Global South particularly hard and is further worsening the living conditions of the people. As a result, it is all the more important that professionals' development service continues during the coronavirus pandemic. *)

We, too, in the AGdD management office are continuing to support current and returning professional development workers. Our coaching and advising offers remain available to you online, by phone, or by e-mail. Particularly now there are a number of inquiries about professional orientation, a topic which we are able to address together with you. Personal contact unfortunately remains restricted. This has impacted on our event program: In-person seminars have been cancelled and in their place, we are offering online events. To this end, we have decided to offer our first BarCamp "Development service connects people – after returning too!" online and look forward to the virtual discussion with professionals. You can learn more about the BarCamp on page 19. The second *transfer* issue of this remarkable year is dedicated to the topic of working as a consultant.



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*) You can find an overview of how professionals are working during the coronavirus pandemic at www.agdd.de/entwicklungsdienst-corona-pandemie

For many returning professionals, acting as a consultant in the field of development cooperation can be an attractive way of following on from their development service and continuing to work internationally.

The stories recounted by our authors in this issue illustrate the various opportunities for working in this field, the challenges of working as a consultant, and how former professionals have found their way in this sector. Returnee Nina Alff, for example, works as a freelance assessor in addition to working part-time as an education advisor. On page 4 she reports on how she combines theory and practice in her two jobs and how this enables her to benefit from her experience of living and working in countries in the Global South.

Rolf Grafe, on the other hand, found his way into this field of work more or less by chance. After completing his development service, his wealth of experience with the "Do No Harm" approach was still very much in demand. He has now been working as a freelance consultant with this special focus for 15 years. In his report he also highlights the downsides of his profession.

After previous numerous postings as a professional development worker in Uganda, at the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM) in India, and as a freelance consultant, Oliver Schmidt joined Agriculture & Finance Consultants in Bonn in 2019. He shares with readers of *transfer* a few insights into his tasks as a project manager and sheds light on how he is able to make use of the experience he gained from working in development service.

As a program coordinator at the consulting company FAKT GmbH, Axel Müller is responsible, among other things, for creating teams for envisaged contracts and is involved in the selection of freelance consultants. In *transfer*, Müller reports on how FAKT selects team members and gives an overview of the important information to include on a CV as a potential team member.

Returnee Inga Nagel eventually left the business of consultancy to younger people so that she could devote herself to something completely different: her beads from West Africa, which were waiting to be given a new lease of life. You can read about how she does this in "Aspects of Return" on page 17.

Enjoy reading - and stay healthy!

Yours sincerely,

Silke Westmann

The best of both worlds

A dream job – 50% education and training officer and 50% consultancy

In 2002, after nearly four years of development service in Mali and Niger, I returned to Germany for the sake of love, which is ironic because I'm a staunch feminist and a gender consultant counsellor. My first development service job as a technical advisor for a small rural women's support project in Niger led me to get involved in practical gender work: I could now subject everything I had learned and researched in my ivory tower at university to a reality check at the local level. After a follow-up contract in neighbouring Mali, where I served as a "Cross-Cutting Gender Consultant" (in German: Gender-Querschnittsberaterin) – I'm not joking! That's what the advisors were called in those days! – I worked increasingly on gender equality in every sector of German bilateral development cooperation and advised projects on gender issues.

After returning to Germany in 2002 I had various post: as a project officer for a small women's NGO; as a gender equality advisor; as a university senior researcher; and finally as a trainer for departing development workers with the GIZ (Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit). By 2012/2013 I had become fed up with commuting long distances for the sake of my love life, so I looked for a way to settle permanently in south-western Germany.

FIRST STEPS TOWARDS BECOMING FREELANCE

When I was working as a project officer, former colleagues from university geography departments were already asking me whether I would be interested in running workshops on development cooperation and development policy and on project management and planning. I also got involved in the "BtE" (Bildung trifft Entwicklung – Education meets Development) programme. I designed workshops and lectures for school students, learned to work with diverse target groups, and further developed my teaching skills in this way. Looking back, I can see that these were the first steps towards becoming freelance. I was able to draw on the facilitation skills which I had developed during nearly four years of development service; my enjoyment of designing interactive workshops; and, of course, my experience of learning intercultural communication skills in the various countries – from Afghanistan to Rwanda – in which I had worked.

HITTING THE JACKPOT!

I got lucky in 2013 when I successfully applied for a part-time post as an education and training officer with the Oikocredit Support Association in Baden-Württemberg. This international association uses the capital of its investors to fund partner organisations and enterprises in the Global South. What a privilege it is to be developing training programmes to promote sustainable finance – programmes which are built around global issues, such as fair trade, supply chains, small-scale farming, and gender equality – to be helping people to see things differently, and to be contributing in a small way to stimulating public debate about our lifestyle and patterns of consumption!

I had already mentioned during my interview that I wanted to continue my



Nina Alff in Congo, 2015: How much gender equality is there in a water project?

freelance activities. Thanks to the nature of the post, this was not an issue. In the spring and autumn, when a lot of trade fair events, and lectures take place, I build up overtime as an education and training officer. This makes it possible for me to then take time off for my freelance work – in consultation with management and the other members of the team.

NETWORKS AND LIFELONG LEARNING

As a former Cross-Cutting Gender Consultant in Mali and Niger and as a trainer for departing development workers, I had the great advantage that, alongside my expertise as a gender equality advisor, I could draw on an extensive network which facilitated my entry into working as an assessor. Former colleagues in development cooperation called on me as a consultant or recommended me to other people. In addition to this I had myself added to GIZ's list of assessors in the field of "gender".

Advanced training in relevant project management tools, creative methods of facilitation, and the facilitation of large groups extended my horizons as a trainer. And, of course, every assignment, whether in Germany or abroad, brings additional learning experiences which I can put to use in future assignments.

THE CHALLENGES...

The coordination of my work as an education and training officer and as an assessor presents me with an organisational challenge. If I have to go abroad for up to two weeks, I either take holiday or ask for leave. This means that contracts which involve travelling abroad are only possible for me during the months when I have less work. I can be flexible as regards contracts which can be completed at a desk in Germany. But this means that weekends sometimes (have to) go by the board, when I have to meet a deadline.

Making detailed agreements with my clients about the tasks which I need to perform is a professional challenge of mine. But the more precisely the tasks are defined, the easier it can be to produce an evaluation, write a study report, or prepare a training course. I face a real dilemma and find it personally challenging, if I sometimes have to say "No" when people contact me about exciting work in the field of gender equality. Unfortunately my enthusiasm for the subject sometimes leads me to overestimate how much time I have available. Then my work-life balance suffers. In the meantime, thanks to some coaching, I have learnt only to tender for contracts which I'm 90 to 100 per cent happy with the content and methods.

IT COULDN'T BE BETTER – THE COMBINATION OF TWO WORLDS

On the one hand I keep abreast of the theory and on the other hand I regularly get involved in the actual practice of development cooperation and development

policy. This enables me to observe all the various causes and effects more closely. As an education and training officer in the field of sustainable investment, global economics, and fair trade, I benefit from the experience I have gained in countries in the Global South for three reasons:

- Firstly, I am able to share authentic impressions and undertones from the Global South.
- Secondly, I get to know new methods and tools for planning, monitoring, and evaluating international development cooperation projects.
- And thirdly, I have to keep myself up to date with where things are at in the debate about development policy (not only with regard to gender equality).

In introductory workshops on participatory project management, for example, I am able to illustrate very clearly the huge gap between the underlying theory and the – sometimes bitter – compromises which have to be made with various actors when projects are being planned. And teaching school students about the right to water is much more effective when they get to carry water in original plastic buckets from Congo on their heads!

BACK FROM DEVELOPMENT SERVICE – AND INTO CONSULTANCY

There is no standard model for getting started as a consultant. In my opinion, the first step is to reflect on one's own expertise and skills. Which specialist subjects do I cover? What methodological competencies do I have? And where is my niche as regards languages, issues, and methods?

What suits me better? Empirical research, and the detailed analysis and recording of data? Or rather the design of interactive workshops and the moderation of large gatherings?

Experts can get themselves registered on the databases of most consultancies. But I believe that it is more effective to make personal contact and arrange to talk to people in individual consultancies. Anyone who, during their development service, is already thinking of becoming a consultant should network with and talk to colleagues in the consultancy field in the country where they are working.



Nina Alff at a regional women's empowerment event – ANA HUNNA Training of Trainers in Morocco

Dr. Nina Alff,
Geographer
1998 - 2001:
Niger, DED
2001 - 2002:
Mali, DED
2011: short-term
contract in Rwanda,
GIZ

Working as a project manager in a consulting firm

From writing a proposal to troubleshooting

Consultancy firms are sometimes called the private sector part of development cooperation. This article shares experiences and success factors of working for one of Germany's leading consultancy firms in the fields of agriculture and finance sector development.

I joined development cooperation towards the end of 2004 as a development advisor, in German "Entwicklungshelfer", seconded by the German Development Service (ded). For two and a half years, I worked with the National Microfinance Association of Uganda. After two years with a CIM-supported (Centrum für Migration & Entwicklung) contract at India's national association of microfinance, I returned to Uganda once more as development advisor. This time, I worked on secondment of ded and subsequently GIZ for four and a half years. I stayed on in Uganda for another two years (again with a CIM-supported contract) before returning with my family to Germany in early August 2016. For nearly three years, I worked as a freelance consultant, including four months as a short-term development advisor in Ghana, before joining the GOPA group, one of the leading development consultant groups in Germany. More specific-

ly, I work as a project manager for AFC Agriculture and Finance Consultants in Bonn, which joined the GOPA Group in 2007, and covers the agricultural and financial sectors.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT TRAINING

I feel the experience gained from these different angles and perspectives on development cooperation is very helpful to performing well as a project manager. However, that background is not a pre-requisite for the job. The pre-requisite is to be a competent project manager. Project management was an essential part of all the positions I have held in development cooperation. However, in large public development agencies, qualification in project management is not a criterion for staff recruitment and development. Personally, I opted for an IHK-course on "project leadership". This course, which has a great deal of content, would take you a year if you spent one to two hours a day on it (depending on how fast you read). Although I read quickly, it took me about three years.

As far as I know, development consultancy firms do not place much emphasis on this type of qualification either, although a large part of their staff hold project manager positions. Many of these project managers are excellent at their jobs without that type of formal qualification. Most project managers have a background related to the field of their projects. For instance, in my case, I am a banker (by training) and an economist, and I work in financial sector development. Many of my colleagues in the agricultural department have a background related to agriculture, agronomy or rural development.



Oliver Schmidt in his modern office in Bonn - In 2019, AFC moved to an energy-efficient building.

Project management is about achieving a fixed set of objectives, within a fixed budget, and a fixed timeframe. This is known as the “magic triangle” of project management. The most important budget line of the development project is the number of consultant days available. Like a freelance consultant, a consulting firm bases its existence on selling these consulting days. And like a freelance consultant, a consulting firm needs to earn a margin on all its costs to exist. Running out of days before achieving the project objectives eats up that margin; having unclaimed days when the project comes to an end eats up that margin as well.

FINDING EXPERTS AND WRITING PROPOSALS

Development projects are mainly assigned by development agencies, among which, in my field, development banks such as the KfW and the Worldbank are important donors/actors. Each of these agencies has its own way of structuring budgets and reporting on project activities and progress. It is important to know these differences to calculate the financial proposal accurately. A miscalculated project can inflict serious damages on a consulting firm, and would affect the project as well. Therefore, the donors tend to prefer working with proven and tested firms.

Writing proposals to win those tenders is a large part of the work of a project manager in a development consulting firm. The smaller the company, the more time the project manager spends on writing proposals. Although, nowadays, the actual writing of a project proposal is an even smaller part of the proposal. Most of the evaluation points are often given to the CVs of the proposed expert. It is therefore essential to find the candidate who meets most of the requirements. There is a trend – a positive one, in my view – to deploy more local experts and to partner with local consultancy firms. If you are not large enough to have a wide network, you need to occupy a niche that is on demand. For instance, experts are on high demand who have a strong streak in digital technology but are also familiar with banking (or farming for that matter).

Not only do I need to find these experts before my competitors bidding on the same tender, but I also need to agree with these experts on a price that suits them. If the expert thought I were ripping them off, problems in the project would already be planted. The price also has to be appropriate for the firm: if the experts are too expensive, the company will fall short of the margin it needs, which also causes problems for the project. However, my impression is that projects are lost more often on the technical side, i.e. method and particularly experts, rather than on the financial side.

MANAGING AND TROUBLESHOOTING

A typical middle-size project lasts for one or two years and involves half a dozen “experts”. My most important role as a project manager is to anticipate and avoid



bottlenecks. There are a couple of tools to manage projects, such as the Gantt chart. These tools are useful when they make a task easier. Yet, there are always issues coming up in the course of a project. Therefore, troubleshooting is my other important role. It always means finding or re-establishing common ground between partner organisations, project funders, i.e. the development agencies, and the experts; and being the custodian of the firm’s interest in all of it. Again, the smaller the firm, the more its interest is defined by money, but AFC is a larger company and it is more attentive to its long-term reputation and thus to the project’s results. Ultimately, the results depend on the project funder, though, because they define the parameters of the project during the tendering phase. Experience helps a lot – so does patience. I have found that my project management course has taught me many valuable people-oriented techniques – crisis management, handling conflict, agreeing on targets, etc. After many years in many different (work) places, I am very happy to work with an engaging and supportive team in a modern office. Nonetheless, the most exciting part of my work is the opportunity to visit project sites, meet the project partners and discover the changes that the project triggers on the ground. Not only does this allow me to better manage the project (team) and write better proposals, but it is also the reason why I joined the field of development cooperation in the first place.

Scenic walk with daughter Lucy Kanyere.

Oliver Schmidt
Economist
2004 - 2007:
Uganda, DED
2010 - 2014:
Uganda, DED/GIZ
Dec. 2017 -
March 2018:
short-term
contract,
Ghana, GIZ

Life as an independent consultant

The success of the work keeps me going

The request to write an article about my experience as an independent consultant reached me in the middle of the “corona crisis”. I had got stranded in Nairobi while in transit on a flight to Doha after a two-week assignment in Cameroon. Immigration regulations had suddenly changed, so that I couldn’t re-enter my country of residence, Qatar. Soon afterwards, I was evacuated to Germany, and so the request came at a time when all further assignments had been cancelled. So it happened that I am reflecting now on almost twenty years of conflict-sensitive programming.

At the end of the 1990s, the “Do No Harm” approach appeared in the professional debates on international cooperation. It was by coincidence that I first came across this new way of thinking when I attended a meeting of the “Appropriate Technology Forum”. In retrospect, I see that my professional life was heavily influenced by coincidences, and one day I received a phone call asking whether I could imagine working again as a development worker with the task of disseminating the knowledge about “Do No Harm” among partner organisations in East Africa.

After four years in Nairobi, the project came to an end. It was my intention at that time to transfer the project to a local NGO in order to secure some sustainability, but for various reasons that process failed. What now? I had gained a considerable reputation, and many organisations had become

interested in the services we were providing with a network of local trainers. So I took things upon myself, and suddenly I was an independent consultant. I had never planned such a career.

For the last fifteen years I have now been in the consultancy business, making “Do No Harm” the pivot of my work. I have worked in more than 40 countries, mostly in Africa and occasionally in the Middle East and in South Asia. Participants from many more countries have attended my workshops, and I truly love the work with people from different cultures and backgrounds. And still it is not

a bit boring, as every context is different and I actually learn from every new assignment and increase my experience with every journey.

BUILDING A REPUTATION

The start wasn’t easy. Switching from a project-based set-up to a situation where “clients” had to pay for everything meant a total change of audience. Instead of local, mostly church-based institutions, clients now turned out to be international NGOs, and so the reputation I had previously built was less helpful than expected. It was also difficult in the beginning to act as an entrepreneur who needs to earn money with his services. Transitioning from being a volunteer for the public good to being a consultant doing a business required some mental adjustments. In the end, it is the quality of the work which attracts potential clients. People talk about their positive experience and recommend you as a qualified expert. It is only occasional that I am screening the internet for interesting assignments, and rare is the experience that something comes out of an application process with an organization that doesn’t know me already.

What is also important is a good network. Networks among organisations are increasing demand, while networks among practitioners are improving quality. I have made it a principle to always work in a team of two. Not only is it more fun when you don’t have to sit alone in your hotel in the evening, the cooperation between two consultants has numerous advantages. First, participants do not get bored by always listening to the same voice; second, the interaction in a team allows constructive feedback and mutual support; and third, colleagues bring in additional capacities and different perspectives. After all these years, this is probably the biggest asset I can bring in. I have experienced colleagues in a number of countries, with whom I have worked for years. This ensures that I have access to good knowledge of local contexts, that I am able to consider social, cultural, political (and gender) sensitivities, and that I can translate training content into numerous languages.

IN A CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT

So I have developed a name for myself and I am offering much needed expertise, I have gained plenty of experience, I speak several languages, I have a wide network. All is set for a splendid future in the consultancy business. But the reality is hard. While a self-employed consultant may follow the illusion of freedom, financial conditions will soon destroy these dreams. In spite of high daily rates for



Rolf Grafe on mission in South Sudan.

paid assignments, other issues need to be considered:

- Securing quality services requires plenty of unpaid work. Developing training material, regularly updating a website, communicating with a wide network, contributing to social media, staying up-to-date on theoretical concepts, documenting and archiving, all this takes time no client is paying for. In addition come administrative issues like health insurance, travel arrangements, book-keeping, tax declarations etc.
- There will be enough time for all this since assignments come with shorter or longer gaps in between. Sometimes it is also the opposite when everybody needs a consultant at the same time. This not only causes stress, it also has financial implications. I have lived through months of no income at all, followed by weeks of intense travel from one country to the next.
- For reasons of accountability, most organisations award a contract only after a competitive bidding process. This means that at least three different consultants invest time in proposals out of which only one will be selected. For the others, their input has been in vain. Staff in some organizations take this very lightly, and may not even consider it necessary to inform about the outcome or let papers lie forever.
- At least when a contract is signed, the consultant can relax a bit, right? No, still, there is a lack of reliability. Assignments may be postponed or even cancelled for all kind of reasons. Sudden budget limitations, unexpected changes in the context, unforeseen absence of key staff, a string of national holidays, even a volcanic eruption have prevented my missions before.
- Never mind though, many assignments take place as scheduled. The work is done, reports are written, requests for changes integrated, invoice written. Now begins the wait for payment. I know some good clients from whom you see your honorarium within three days. Others take two months, some half a year. What is most annoying is when delays are explained by internal regulations, like when there is only one payment date per month or when books are closed on 10 December so that payments can only be made in the coming year. Try that at your grocery store!

KNOWLEDGE, INTERACTION, VERSATILITY

The status of an independent consultant has its specific challenges. But it can be very rewarding, too, when people see the relevance for their work. More than any financial reward, it is the success of the work that keeps me going. When you hear sentences like "This training has changed my life", then you know that you have contributed something valuable. In order to reach such an outcome, three ingredients are needed:

- Knowledge may be the most obvious, but it is not enough to be an "expert" on a specific topic. Conflict sensitivity needs to be applied in specific contexts, and so the consultant needs to understand that context, which includes the geographical situation, historic developments, social relationships, religious backgrounds, political influences, ethnic identities, economic conditions. Of course all information can be

"googled" but in order to respond to a question you need to understand on the spot, and for every context you work in. Today South Sudan, next month Mali, after that Lebanon.

- Next comes interaction. All the knowledge doesn't help if the consultant cannot engage participants or gain the trust of project staff during evaluations. Lecturing will help little, and so it is essential to create the right atmosphere for each event. Active participation not only increases the quality of information but also helps in assuring that recommendations are actually put into practice. I didn't know about the importance of making everybody feel at ease before I started working in Africa. My African colleagues have taught me!
- Finally, versatility. Conflict sensitivity is a cross-cutting approach. It is adding specific perspectives to programming procedures, independently of the sector in which a project is implemented. I have worked with health staff, agricultural experts, veterinarians, teachers, engineers, social workers, sanitation experts, peace-builders, economists, and religious scholars. Methodologies always need to be adjusted to the specific purpose, and this is another reason why my consultancy work has still not become boring.

Another point needs to be added. While the work as a development worker is usually limited to a particular location, or at least to one country, independent consultants may find themselves in many different places. Your general constitution and your stomach need to cope with these sudden changes. As a workshop moderator you can not afford to fall sick in the field! Without you, the workshop can not take place, and so twenty-five participants may have come in vain.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Some people become "consultants" because they have nothing else to do. I have seen project staff become consultants the moment they have lost their job. Accordingly, there are plenty of impostors. If you are serious about becoming a well-respected consultant, you need to stand out from the crowd:

- Develop a well-defined area of expertise and assure that your input fulfils high standards of quality
- Invest in creating networks and stay connected
- Get familiar with all kinds of administrative and financial regulations
- Think about financial security
- Stick to it (it takes several years to make yourself a name).

I don't want to discourage anybody, but I have to highlight again that the status of an independent consultant is not an easy one. What makes things worse is the fact that there is probably no way back after some years. When I once applied for a fixed job again, somebody let me know in all confidentiality: "After so many years working on your own, you may not fit into any organizational hierarchy again. Nobody appreciates having someone in an office whose previous job it was to find out about mistakes and suggest improvements."



Dr. Rolf Grafe
Geographer
1994 - 1998:
Sudan, DED
2001 - 2005:
Kenya, DÜ

More information on conflict-sensitive programming can be found on

www.donoharm.info

Interview:

Self-employment – you must develop a high degree of awareness of yourself

Dr Maria Kräuter has worked throughout Germany as a business consultant, coach, and trainer for many years. She offers her services as a consultant especially to people who are starting up a new business. She focuses not only on business start-ups, but also on business development, the transition to new ownership for small and medium-sized enterprises, and career change for individuals. She has been lecturing on “How to start a business” for many years at various institutions of higher education in Germany.

www.maria-kraeuter.de



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Ms Kräuter, a lot of people who are returning from development service think about becoming self-employed – as a consultant, for example. What do they need to consider first before setting up a new business?

I recommend first finding out whether running your own business is really going to be right for you: Are you ready and willing to take care of all the things which have to be done when you are self-employed? You'll be responsible not only for doing a professional job, but also for tasks such as marketing, dealing with bureaucracy, and financial management.

The next important questions to ask yourself are: What sort of projects do I want to undertake? What do I want to achieve by being self-employed? Do I want to earn my living from it? How much time do I want to invest? This might make a difference to the kinds of projects which you choose to undertake, for example.

Then you have to flesh out your business proposition: What profile do I want to create for myself? What special skills and competencies do I have to offer? What do I want people to recommend me for? Where consultants are concerned, it is important for potential clients to have a clear idea of which tasks and problems the person can be entrusted with.

What are the first practical steps towards becoming self-employed?

You should begin by getting a good overview of everything and collecting information. Then, at this stage, I strongly recommend drawing up a detailed business plan which covers all the important aspects of setting up a new business. You can gain a great deal of inner clarity in this way.

If you have this clarity, you will later be able to communicate what you actually stand for much more clearly and simply. And you will be able to identify any important points which still need to be clarified, before you take the first practical steps and things get set in stone.

What costs do you need to take into account when creating a business plan?

Creating a business plan includes drawing up a financial plan which provides answers to a lot of important questions: Will I be able to earn enough to live on, if I'm self-employed? In order to answer this question, you must also ask yourself: How much am I actually going to need to maintain my desired lifestyle? What do I need in terms of a sensible pension plan? What do I need in the way of insurance? How much will I need to set aside for investment, training, periods when I'm not working, and so on? All this has to be included in the calculation. Then there are operating costs and expenditure on technical equipment to be taken into account as well. These costs are usually quite manageable where consultancy is concerned.

But then the question arises: Is what is left of the income going to be enough to meet my expectations?

Are there “typical” mistakes which people often make and which one should avoid at all costs?

Some people go ahead with setting up a business wearing rose-tinted glasses. They have an attractive project or find a customer and launch out. But that is not an adequate basis for a sustainable business. You have to be clear from the start that you are going to have to go about finding more clients, if your business is to keep going.

On the other hand, I have also known people to do a great deal of research, collect lots of information, and obtain plenty of advice, but never actually do anything. And there are similar extremes, when it comes to the initial investment: Some people content themselves with tools and equipment which actually make the work more difficult. Others equip themselves with technology which they don't need, but which is a financial burden. It makes a lot of difference, if you are able to find a good middle course.

Another common mistake is that people are not sufficiently clear about which services they can realistically offer and whether there is a market for them. An objective market analysis is essential.

What can you recommend as regards sources of information and counselling services?

The Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and local chambers of commerce provide very good materials on the subject of starting up a new business. ver.di's “Guide to self-employment” is also recommended, especially for solo self-employed persons. And then you can also obtain information and advice from start-up initiatives and good start-up consultants.

If you're researching on the internet, you should check the quality of the materials offered and the reliability of

the sources: The information which circulates through chats and forums is sometimes dubious. It is not always accurate.

What kinds of grants and subsidies can you apply for, if you're starting a new business?

If you are able to start your business while receiving unemployment benefit, a "start-up grant" from the Job Centre is a great help during the start-up phase: You receive 300 euro social security benefit in addition to ALG 1 (unemployment benefit) for six months. This is on condition that you have a remaining entitlement to ALG 1 for at least 150 days.

However, you do not have a legal right to this start-up grant. Grants are awarded according to the merits of each case. You have to submit a business plan, which then has to be assessed by an expert body and found to be viable.

Some federal states also give grants/subsidies for sessions with an advisor prior to setting up a new business. In individual cases, job centres also issue so-called AVGS vouchers for free consultations as part of the preparation for starting up a business.

And if you are already self-employed, you can also obtain a grant from the BAFA (Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control) to receive guidance and advice from a business consultant.

How might the "freelance" nature of a business be significant during the start-up phase?

There is a lot of erroneous information circulating on this subject. The distinctions between a freelance professional and a business are complex and sometimes very fine; small details can make a big difference. Freelance work is defined much more narrowly than commonly thought. Not every consultant is necessarily always freelance. What is much more important, for example, is how the work is organised in practice and what training background a person has. It is therefore essential to obtain competent advice in such cases, especially when things are doubtful. One place to go to for an initial assessment could be the Institut für Freie Berufe.

A wrong decision can have serious financial consequences. If, as the result of an audit, it turns out that you are not classified as freelance but as a business, you will have to pay corporation tax. You could then end up with large bills for corporation tax from previous years.

Are you likely to have problems, if you are essentially working for a sole client? Are you then likely to fall under the definition of pseudo-self-employment?

The information circulating on this subject – that anyone who has only one client is not genuinely self-employed – is incorrect. This is a misunderstanding. Even if you have only one client, you may nevertheless meet all the criteria for being self-employed. However, if you only work for one client* and do not employ anyone but yourself, then you have to pay pension contributions as a self-employed person. This means that you have to pay the full amount (100%) of the pension contributions.

Pseudo-self-employment, on the other hand, does not, in the first place, have anything to do with the number of clients. If your work for only one of your clients fits the criteria for pseudo-self-employment – i.e. if you are

integrated into the operating procedures, for example, act like an employee, and have to follow someone else's instructions, etc. – then, in the course of an audit, your self-employment may be deemed to be fictitious. However, this usually only makes a difference to that particular client, who then has to pay the missing contributions into the social security system.

How can you insure yourself against self-employment not working out?

Well, I recommend having a plan B, if you're starting a new business. There is, for example, the option of having voluntary unemployment insurance. You have to apply for it within three months of becoming self-employed. The monthly contributions range from 70 to 80 euros, and during the start-up phase they are even reduced by 50%. Once you have paid in for a whole year, you become entitled to ALG 1 for six months. And after two years your entitlement is extended to twelve months. This is not bad as a "safety net".

Then I recommend the traditional measure of building up reserves. In principle, if you are self-employed, you should plan to have reserves to tide you over through lean times. It is especially important to keep careful account of actual income and expenditure in comparison with your budget: Are you earning enough to cover all your costs, i.e. both private and business expenditures? If you find that you keep having to top up your income in some way, then the question arises as to whether it makes sense to continue being self-employed.

Do you have a couple more tips for our readers from your experience as a consultant?

In my view, maintaining a good network of potential clients and colleagues – by building and nurturing relationships – is the be-all and end-all of self-employment, because it is essential for the acquisition of new contracts. It is not a question of making direct enquiries about possible work. It is better to approach things indirectly, to identify and address common issues, to make an authentic contribution to discussions and debates, and to develop your own style. It is important for the contacts in your network and any potential clients to have your strengths and range of services in mind when suitable projects are in the pipeline.

Then what I think is very important is if you want to stay self-employed in the long run, you have to learn to look after yourself well. It is important to be able to say "no". It is essential to be able to set your own boundaries – especially with all the modern means of communication. Some self-employed people have the feeling that they have to be available all the time. They never switch their work phone off and just feel driven by events. But the main objective of self-employment is to maintain your capacity for work in the long term. And this includes having the ability to say: This is the weekend or I'm on holiday, so I'm not available just now.

And one final recommendation: Always listen to your gut instincts when making business decisions. This may not seem very rational. But gut instincts are an excellent compass for a lot of important business decisions.

* You are deemed to be self-employed with a sole client, if you earn more than five-sixths of your total business income from one customer.

Maria Kräuter works as a trainer in the "self-employment" online course of the AGdD Reintegration Programme, guiding returning development workers while they consider taking up self-employment.

Interview:
Dieter Kroppenberg

Precisely tailored CVs are particularly important

Tips for applying as a consultant

Axel Müller is a geographer and has worked at the consulting company FAKT GmbH since 2015. As a program coordinator, he is responsible, among other things, for creating teams for envisaged contracts and is involved in the selection of freelance consultants. In *transfer*, Müller reports on how FAKT selects team members and gives an overview of the important information to include in a CV as a potential team member.

tion, intermittent long-term and short-term consultancy services, and the conduct of training seminars and conference management for clients, such as GIZ, KfW as well as German and international NGOs. FAKT experts combine solid technical expertise with social science and sound field experience. More specific information is on our website www.fakt-consult.de.

In order to be able to carry out these assignments, however, a tendering process must first be won in which independent experts play an important role.

TENDER PROCESS IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

In the sector of international development/development cooperation, we regularly need independent experts to advise, accompany or evaluate projects. Usually, they are hired on a short-term contract, i.e. assignments that are limited in time and last only a few days or weeks. In Germany, consulting assignments are advertised and awarded primarily by governmental development cooperation organisations such as GIZ or KfW, international non-governmental organisations (NGO), foundations or church aid agencies. Calls for proposals are published on the respective NGO's website or bundled on (sometimes fee-based) general platforms for awarding service contracts such as www.evergabe-online.de/start.

There is a wide range of demand for consultancy services, including technical leadership for processes, evaluations, implementation of extensive project activities, technical and methodological trainings, capacity building,

academic studies, organisational development, impact assessments, facilitation of workshops and other events, etc. Likewise, advisory services are provided at various levels ranging from international/national-level policy advice to government ministries to advice for civil society partner organisations or institutions at regional level and cooperation with grassroots organisations at local level.



Axel Müller (second from right) during a consulting assignment in Walikale, DR Congo with MISEREOR and Caritas (2018)

FAKT GmbH was founded in 1986 as a consulting company for government and non-governmental organisations in the field of development cooperation. The company's areas of work are rural development, climate change adaptation, employment promotion, vocational education and training, natural resource governance and the cross sectorial topics evaluation, digitalisation and impact monitoring. FAKT services include implementation of project components in technical coopera-

PRECISELY TAILORED CVS

In order to respond to calls for proposals for short-term assignments, we first establish a team of experts with the appropriate expertise and experience. Together, we develop a sound proposal which outlines our technical and methodological approaches, time frame and budget. When preparing the proposal, we analyse the Terms of Reference (ToR) which not only describe the tasks to be carried out but also the required criteria that the consultants should fulfil. Consulting firms like FAKT regularly search for freelance experts in their own or external expert databases (such as www.developmentaid.org or www.linkedin.com). We rely on strong and well-designed CVs in order to find the best suitable team of experts. High quality CVs are essential when submitting an offer, because the client must immediately be able to recognise that the proposed experts have the necessary methodological and professional skills to carry out the assignment.

For this reason, the CV should be carefully tailored to each assignment and should highlight experiences and qualifications relevant for the respective assignment. It is equally important to compose a well-balanced team of experts that covers all required competencies. Team members, therefore should complement each other in terms of regional experience, language skills and, in particular, areas of experience.

Once the proposal has been submitted, the development cooperation organisation or NGO evaluates the proposals on the basis of an assessment grid and selects the contractor. As soon as the contract has been awarded, the consulting firm contracts the team members for short-term assignments. The consultancy

services are then carried out in close consultation and cooperation with the client. Once the contract has been successfully completed, the short-term contract between the experts and the consulting company ends.

TIPS FOR A GOOD CV

CVs for short-term assignments may well differ from CVs for a permanent position. For example, letters of recommendation are essential for permanent positions, but are less relevant for short-term assignments. These, in turn, require a condensed presentation of relevant professional, methodological and regional experience and expertise. In fact, the length of the CV is often limited, e.g. to a maximum of four or six pages.

A good CV should contain an overview of your career and the most important professional experiences. It should present the relevant qualifications that the expert brings to the job. The aim is to present all relevant information in a clear and structured way, preferably in a table.

The CV starts with personal data such as name, place of residence, nationality and date of birth. The educational background (secondary school and academic degrees) must also be included. Professional or consulting experience is elementary and is usually presented chronologically. Important information to include is period of the assignment, location and client/employer as well as a brief description of the position and the activities performed. It is advisable to also mention selected consultancy assignments and publications as well as membership of professional associations or other relevant organisations and networks. Relevant language skills are also essential: These should be presented in a table along with a self-assessment using a grid (best to use EU reference grid, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, CEFR). Other skills such as IT skills and further relevant education and training attended should be mentioned. Depending on the advertisement, different key qualifications are sought accordingly. For this reason, a CV should always highlight any skills and experience specifically requested in the ToR. Finally, including a section on "key qualifications" in the CV allows you to explicitly describe core competencies related to the respective assignment. Finally, relevant international work experience can also be listed in a table.

To conclude, the above outlined tips can be useful guidelines for developing a high-quality CV targeted at short-term consultancy assignments.



Axel Müller
Geographer,
program coordinator
2007 - 2011:
Cameroon,
AGIAMONDO

AXEL MÜLLER'S CHECKLIST FOR A GOOD CV

- Name
- Date of birth
- Citizenship
- Place of residence
- Education
- Language skills (according to CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)
- Membership of professional bodies
- Present position
- Skills (e.g. computer literacy, etc)
- Key qualifications (relevant to the project)
- Specific experience in different countries or project area
- Professional experience
- Selected consulting assignments
- Publications
- Further education, training, etc.

Interview:

The consultant database at GIZ's Sectoral Department

GIZ is always looking for qualified and experienced experts for short-term assignments in the field of international development. In order to find experienced experts for short-term assignments, GIZ's Sectoral Department (FMB) maintains a database which currently includes the profiles of about 900 consultants. Experts can apply to be included in the database.

Dr. Christine Schäfer and her team of staff are responsible for the content and maintenance of the consultant database.



Ms Schäfer, who can get themselves listed in the consultant database? Are there special criteria for inclusion? Do you have to have worked with GIZ before, for example?

In the consultant database at GIZ's Sectoral Department we list experts who have worked in international development. Anyone who is interested in undertaking assignments for GIZ can get themselves listed on the database. "To get yourself listed" means firstly making yourself known to us as someone who is interested in working with us, and sending us your details.

We, i.e. the Sectoral Department, then examine whether you, as an expert, fulfil the criteria for inclusion in the database. This depends, among other things, on our particular needs for expertise in the various fields in which we work. These are: economic and social development, employment; governance and conflict; climate change, rural development, infrastructure; methods, digital transformation, innovation. Experience of working for GIZ is an advantage, but not essential. We are, above all, interested in expertise related to development cooperation.

What is especially valuable is knowledge and experience of the procedures of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) or other funding agencies such as the Federal Ministry for the Environment and the EU's Development Agency.

The registration requests are examined by our centres of expertise. We then decide, on the basis of their assessment, whether or not an expert is to be listed in

our database. It is not only their qualifications which are important, but also GIZ's needs in particular areas of expertise.

So what information should experts include, if they want to submit a promising profile? What documents do they need for the purpose of verification?

They can register very easily on the GIZ website. After entering their personal details, they then need to provide information about their education and training, qualifications, language skills, and experience of working in particular regions of the world.

Once they have registered, we then contact them by e-mail and ask them to send us their CV using our standard template. We also ask experts to name referees who can vouch for their qualifications.

On the basis of this information, the Sectoral Department's centres of expertise then assess whether the person is of interest to us as an expert consultant and whether they and their particular expertise are needed. This process may well take quite some time, especially when experts have expertise in several fields and feedback is therefore required from several centres of expertise.

How do you go about building up the database? Do you actively recruit people?

In principle we aim to have all the competencies which we are looking for represented in the database; to build up the available expertise; and to recruit new people. The system is therefore open to anyone who is interested in applying. And it is relatively easy to find on the GIZ website (by going to [www.giz.de/GDB/ Gutachter/](http://www.giz.de/GDB/Gutachter/)). However we do not systematically recruit people in order to build up the database. We know this means that most of the applicants find out about this tool by chance. But there are also occasions when experts come to the notice of our centres of expertise at international conferences and they are then invited to register.

Are there also fields of work or regions where you are especially on the look-out for new consultants?

Yes, our level of need varies significantly according to the area of expertise, but we have not yet gone through our database to carry out a systematic analysis of our needs.

Right now, we are developing a strategy in relation to consultants. And the different levels of need for consultants in the various fields of work is a significant

factor. We aim to be able to focus our recruitment better in future. Aside from the evaluation of our database, we know through other factors, which fields of work are short of expertise. One of these areas is digital transformation, for example, where we are very likely to be looking for more data analysts and experts with a background in IT. Much the same applies to “sustainable energy systems” as well. If you ask about regional variations, we have not yet carried out a rigorous analysis of our needs in this respect. But, generally speaking, people who have experience of fragile contexts and of relevant regions are always highly sought after.

So when is the database used? For which kinds of contracts?

It is only used for short-term assignments. And our consultant database does not contain any companies, only individuals. Individuals don't have to be freelance, though. They may be employed by a consulting firm, in which case this is recorded in the database. In such cases, contracts are awarded through the firm of consultants. Sometimes we may approach the consulting firm concerned and be told that the particular person is not available. The firm then usually recommends someone else with similar expertise.

As regards the types of contract, we can say that the Sectoral Department's planners develop the projects which are to be implemented. This means that we often need the support of experts on a short term basis. Our contracts therefore often involve the deployment of experts who are given the task of appraising new or follow-on projects. They carry out field visits or virtual missions and develop the project proposals together with the planners, GIZ workers in the field, and project partners.

When consultants take over the drafting of project plans for a particular commissioning body, it is very important for them to be familiar with the procedures and methods which are used by other public commissioning bodies or in projects which are co-financed by the BMZ. Experts with such a background are then classed as so-called “core consultants”. Core consultants are required to acquire the necessary knowledge of the methods, instruments, and procedures which GIZ employs and to undergo regular further training. “Core consultant” is then also an attribute which is recorded in the consultant database.

Other contracts tend to be of a specialist nature, where it is a question of advising on-going projects about specific issues. We commission studies on specific subjects, for example, and often recruit regional experts for this. We therefore include consultants from partner countries in our database.

So how does GIZ go about awarding assignments? Are all contracts put out to tender? And what role does the database play in this case?

GIZ awards contracts in accordance with the legal regulations governing the tendering and awarding of contracts. This is done through an electronic portal. The procedure varies depending on the total value of

the contract.

When we are awarding short-term contracts to consultants, we usually draw up a shortlist of various candidates who have the required expertise. They are then contacted by our contracting department. These candidates then compete for the contract. They are assessed according to pre-set criteria which are outlined in the terms of reference.

Where this process is concerned, it is advantageous to be listed in the database, because this is the main basis for drawing up the shortlist. We use search criteria and suitable keywords to identify which profiles fit the contract which is to be put out to tender. Expertise, language skills, knowledge of the region, and knowledge of procedures and methods all play an important role. But it should be pointed out that the fact that someone is listed in the consultant database does not mean that they are in any way entitled to be awarded a contract by GIZ.

Is the consultant database used only by the Sectoral Department of GIZ?

The consultant database is compiled, maintained, and made available by the Sectoral Department, but it is used throughout GIZ – and not only in Germany. We now receive regular feedback from GIZ projects abroad expressing great satisfaction with the recruitment opportunities which have been opened up by our consultant database.

Are there other consultant databases in your organisation?

Yes, indeed. There are other databases of experts within GIZ, such as the Gender Consultant Database which was created when GIZ was developing its gender strategy. And then there is also the Consulting Database of the GIZ International Service, for example. We are now starting to think about combining these databases.

Thank you, Ms Schäfer.

Interview:
Dieter Kroppenber

ALL ABOUT CONSULTING – USEFUL INFORMATION

AIZ COURSE ON GIZ'S MANAGEMENT MODEL "CAPACITY WORKS"

The AIZ (Academy for International Cooperation) offers introductory courses in various languages on "Capacity Works", the GIZ management model for sustainable development. The event is meant not only for GIZ employees but also for external advisers and assessors who are working in development projects run by GIZ. The model is useful for the management of contracts which aim to contribute effectively to the capacity development of partner organisations, so that there is a lasting improvement in the performance of people, organisations, and social institutions in partner countries. The course covers the main elements of "Capacity Works" for use by consultants; analysis of – and reflection on – the interrelationships between these main elements; and discussion of the five Capacity Works success factors – strategy, cooperation, management structure, procedures, and learning and innovation. Further information is available at:

www.learning-giz.de

TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND COURSES

The consultancy firm Como Consult advises corporations and foundations, international development agencies and their partners throughout the world, governmental and administrative bodies, and civil society actors in Germany. Como Consult also runs a training programme and various courses in organisational development.

www.como-consult.de

In addition to the postgraduate course, "International Cooperation for Sustainable Development", the Centre for Rural Development (SLE) in Berlin offers various training courses for international specialists, including, for example, the online programme, "Management of Development Projects".

www.sle-berlin.de

THE MASTER (BLENDED LEARNING) OF EVALUATION' MABLE

The Master (Blended Learning) of Evaluation programme of Saarland University provides skills and knowledge for professional scientific work on evaluations in the fields of politics, administration, and social services. The study programme is offered in cooperation with the Distance and Independent Studies Center of the Technical University of Kaiserslautern.

The study programme prepares for scientific and methodologically sound explorations of any kind of evaluation questions. It also delivers skills and insights into the practical work of commissioners and evaluation experts from the beginning of developing evaluation tasks to the end of utilizing the evaluation results. The Master of Evaluation conveys key competences for monitoring, quality management, organizational development, project and programme management.

www.uni-saarland.de/en/study/programmes/continuing-education/mable.html

The German-language "Master of Evaluation" course at Saarland University and the Saarland University of Applied Sciences is no longer offered.

VER.DI MEDIAPHON GUIDE FOR THE SELF-EMPLOYED

Ver.di's Guide for the Self-employed is an online guide which addresses all the questions around working freelance and includes practical, easy-to-follow guidance – e.g. regarding questions of status, taxes, contract management, copyright, and insurance. The guide is updated continuously with important updates incorporated into the guide on a daily basis.

The guide consists of freely accessible basic information and detailed information for a small fee. Non-members can choose from various subscriptions for an access code to the detailed guide. Verdi members have full use of the guide free of charge.

www.selbststaendigen.info

INFORMATION ABOUT SELF-EMPLOYMENT

On our website we have compiled helpful information and tips for you on the subject of self-employment.

www.agdd.de/selbstaendigkeit

INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANCY FIRMS

On our website you can find an overview of selected consultancy firms which are active internationally and have particular expertise in various fields:

www.agdd.de/consultancies_ez_bezug

Brought back from Africa: passion for jewellery and beads

Why am I supposed to write about my jewellery making business? What does my solo enterprise, FARAFINA, have to do with my past as a development worker? It is true that I would never have had the idea of making necklaces, bracelets, and earrings, if I hadn't ...

But let me start at the beginning. In 1976 I went out with the German Development Service, DED, to Burkina Faso, which was still called Upper Volta in those days. After that I worked in a variety of roles in several different places in other African countries, until I came full circle by returning to Burkina Faso in 2010. This was followed by several years in Haiti before I reached retirement age and settled in Germany. Retirement was out of the question, though. I led consultancy projects abroad and ran workshops in German schools, in which I shared my experience of our "One World". But I soon left the tough business of consulting to younger people. And working in schools took it out of me as well.

Yet I still had all my beads from West Africa, and they were waiting to be given a new lease of life. Right from the start I was very taken with the traditional jewellery of people in Africa. During all the years there I had wandered around the markets and explored the magical world of beads. I had drunk tea with merchants surrounded by their treasures and listened to their stories about how and where the jewellery had been made and what meaning or significance it had. I was fascinated by the fact that a lot of beads came from glassworks in Bohemia and Veneto. They were already traded by the Europeans during the 18th century in exchange for highly prized goods from what was then the Gold Coast. As time went on, the colourful glass beads found their way across the whole continent. They were combined with traditional amulets and with gold, bronze, and clay beads and given a place in local cultures. They were worn by kings and priestesses and used in religious rites. And they were often the most valuable possessions of simple farming women.

TRADITION MEETS MODERNITY

I began to collect old beads and also discovered how new ones are made nowadays. This is where tradition meets modernity. In West Africa traditional smiths still use ancient methods of production, but they now melt down broken water taps and the remains of copper cables to make brass or bronze pendants. In Ghana there's a flourishing craft which specialises in the production of beads from old bottles and broken window panes. These colourful beads of recycled glass resonate with today's zeitgeist and are exported all around the world. Craftspeople in Togo carve beads out of wood and coconut shells. And in Burkina Faso decorative beads

are made from clay and then painted – in the same way that people used to make spindles for spinning cotton. Every bead has its own story: Its history may stretch back into the distant past; or, on the other hand, it might reflect the world of today.

JEWELLERY WORKSHOP AND ONLINE SHOP

So wasn't it obvious that I should continue to live out my passion for beads, now that I was back in Germany? I had already had a lot of practice at making unique pieces of jewellery for myself and for my friends. This calls for craftsmanship as well as knowledge of the materials. In the end I finally decided to set up my own business and, as a

"senior entrepreneur", to create my own brand, which I called FARAFINA. This means "Black Africa" in Bambara, the main lingua franca in the heart of West Africa. In my small workshop I design jewellery, tinker with the materials, and create necklaces, bracelets, and earrings from African beads and other special materials.

This year I took my business online with a website and a shop www.etsy.com/de/shop/FarafinaPerlen. And I have an active presence on several social media platforms, where I display my jewellery and write about where beads come from and how they are made – in an attempt to explain how valuable they are and to tell people about their cultural significance. In this way I'm able to express my creativity and share my experience of Africa.



Inga Nagel creates jewellery from African beads and other materials.

www.farafina-perlenschmuck.de

Inga Nagel
1976 - 1979:
Burkina Faso, DED
1985 - 1988:
Cameroon, DED
1990:
Cameroon/Chad,
DED
1991:
Burkina Faso, DED
1993 - 1998:
Benin, DED
2002 - 2005:
Sudan, DED
2005 - 2010:
Burkina Faso, DED
2013 - 2017:
Haiti, GIZ

60 Years of Protestant development service

Human beings are at the heart of development



©Hans Lachmann/ Brot für die Welt

Irmela Runge, a paediatric nurse, was DÜ's 100th development worker when she left for India in the mid sixties.

"During the years of hunger and hardship for refugees after the Second World War we were the recipients of a great deal of love and generous aid from our sister churches all around the world. So more than a few people in our congregations fulfil their desire to give thanks to God by devoting a couple of years of their life to service in other churches in other countries." This is how the Protestant churches in Germany explained to their partner churches why they wanted to organise development service. Already during the first year of the Bread for the World (Brot für die Welt) campaign people saw that it was not only necessary to give money in response to the Bread for the World appeal, but also to give personal service.

The Service in the Ecumenical World working group, which was founded on 9 November 1960, grew out of the Distribution Committee of Bread for the World. The Diakonisches Werk (service and aid agency of the Protestant churches) thought that, as with the Bread for the World campaign, integration into the Diakonisches Werk would not be very helpful in the long run. They recommended obtaining legal status as an independent association.

1961: THE FIRST DEVELOPMENT WORKERS

"Dienste in Übersee; Arbeitsgemeinschaft evangelischer Kirchen in Deutschland" e.V. (DÜ) ("Service Overseas; Working Group of the Protestant Churches in Germany"), with its headquarters in Stuttgart, deployed the first five development workers in 1961; in 1962 there were already 37. The focus was on health and teaching professions and on skilled technicians. DÜ's first development worker worked with the Protestant Council of Churches in Cameroon from January 1961 to April 1967. The principles which still guide DÜ today, have guided it from the very beginning: Development workers should be deployed in response to explicit requests from partner organisations. Expressions such as "sending out" were avoided right from the beginning. It was also clear from the start that those being deployed should be professionally qualified. The idea was to combine action inspired by solidarity with specialist skills. There was a conscious decision to avoid referring to skilled development workers as missionaries, volunteers, or aid workers. The risk of development workers undermining the project management of partner organisations also had to be excluded. For this reason, too close a link between financial aid and the provision of personnel was to be avoided. Right from the start, the term of service was limited to three years so that development workers would "make themselves redundant" as quickly as possible.

Jürgen Deile, coordinator for international staff programs at Bread for the World, chairman of the board at AgdD

1970: LEGAL STATUS AS A SERVICE AGENCY

On this basis DÜ e.V. was given legal status in 1970 as a service agency under the provisions of the Development Workers Act which had been passed in 1969.

Already in the early years DÜ described development as a process which also took place in one's own society, meaning that in principle every country can be regarded as a developing country. "ERD – Entwicklungsrepublik Deutschland" ("DRG – Developing Republic of Germany") was used as a slogan at the Kirchentage (church gatherings). Community on a global scale was to be practised and demonstrated in church circles. Experts from Africa, Asia, and Latin America were brought in to support institutions in Germany. And returning development workers were given contracts in their home country, which enabled them to make a contribution which drew on their personal and professional experience. There was also a reintegration programme and educational work was expanded.

1999: MERGER INTO THE EED

Towards the end of the nineties, as a result of the first merger of Protestant development agencies, the history of DÜ e.V. as an independent association came to an end after 40 years. However the service agency continued its work under the umbrella of the Protestant Development Service (Evangelische Entwicklungsdienst e.V., EED) in Bonn. The DÜ gGmbH (Service Overseas non-profit limited liability company) was founded as a wholly owned subsidiary of the EED and has since then been recognised as a development agency under the provisions of the Development Workers Act. Both the civil peace service and voluntary service for development took shape especially as part of the EED. During a second merger in 2012, the EED, including DÜ gGmbH, i.e. the service programmes, was absorbed by the Protestant Agency for Diakonie and Entwicklung (Evangelische Werke für Diakonie und Entwicklung e.V., EWDE), as part of the Bread for the World brand.

Now, after 60 years and under the brand name of Bread for the World, Protestant development service continues to follow the same principle: Human beings are at the heart of development. We need to build bridges between cultures and to develop institutional networks in a world which is growing closer and closer together, but in which more and more people are excluded and marginalised, and there is less and less space for civil society.



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Sebastian Lasinger, community media and human rights advisor, with a radio presenter during a radio programme in Sierra Leone.

BARCAMP, 18 - 19 SEPTEMBER 2020: DEVELOPMENT SERVICE CONNECTS PEOPLE – AFTER RETURNING TOO!

FIRST ONLINE BARCAMP FOR (RETURNING) PROFESSIONALS AND THEIR PARTNERS

At our dialogue forum for returning professionals in Berlin last year we already discussed a lot of issues to do with returning. And a lot of people were interested in further exchange. Now we would like to invite all returnees – including those who were not in Berlin – to join us in another round of discussions – at the first online development service BarCamp.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

A BarCamp is an open conference, or “non conference”, with open workshops (sessions), the contents of which are planned by the participants themselves at the beginning of the event and designed as the event progresses. This means that the professionals who are participating decide what issues are important to them as regards their time after returning from development service or civil peace service (CPS), what they have in common with other former professionals in various kinds of service, and what they want to talk about. Each participant can decide during the event which workshop they would like to attend. In spite of the online format, it will be thoroughly interactive.

WHY TAKE PART?

The online BarCamp gives participants the opportunity to exchange ideas and network with other returnees. It promises to be exciting, especially because current and former returning

professionals will come together from all the various sending agencies, so a variety of perspectives will be represented. There will be plenty of time to get to know new people and perhaps to meet “old” acquaintances again.

WHEN AND HOW?

The BarCamp will take place virtually (on Zoom) on two half days:

Friday, 18 September 2020,

from 3.30 - 6.45 pm and

Saturday, 19 September 2020,

from 9.30 am to 1.30 pm

SIGN UP AND JOIN IN

Participation is free of charge. Please note that the number of participants will be limited.

Please register by 4 September 2020, either on our website or by sending an e-mail to: seminare@agdd.de

Further information about the programme and registration is available at: www.agdd.de/barcamp-entwicklungsdienst



AGdD events on the topics of “self-employment” and “consulting”

AGdD's Reintegration Programme regularly offers seminars and online events on the subjects of self-employment and consulting. Returning professionals are given the opportunity to pick up useful tips from others' practical experience, share their ideas, and have their questions answered.

www.agdd.de/seminare

ProfilPASS for self-employment

A “Development Service / Civil Peace Service ProfilPASS” has been designed especially for professional development workers and their relatives. AGdD and the German Institute for Adult Education/Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning (DIE) have worked together – and in cooperation with sending agencies and returnees – on the design of the ProfilePASS, which enables individuals to put together a structured collection of material showing their work experience and life experience and to formulate their goals.

Our partner, DIE, has developed a ProfilPASS for individuals who are (or seek to be) self-employed, that is for anyone who wants to become freelance or launch their own business. The ProfilPASS for self-employment is therefore intended for anyone who is thinking about starting a business. It is only available in German.

www.profilpass.de/download

“WILA Arbeitsmarkt” – reduced subscription rate for returnees

Every week “WILA Arbeitsmarkt” publishes a review of several hundred job vacancies collected from daily and weekly newspapers, journals, and online portals, especially in the broad fields of the humanities, social sciences, environment, and nature. The weekly editions also contain tips and background articles about career prospects, which are also of great interest to returnees. It is possible to subscribe to the print edition, an electronic edition, or a combination of the two.

Returnees can receive the magazine at the reduced (student) rate of €3.45 (electronic), €3.80 (print), or €5.30 (combination). If you would like to take out a subscription, please contact us at info@agdd.de. You will then receive a confirmation from us, which will enable you to obtain a subscription from WILA at the reduced rate.

Additional information and a sample issue are available at

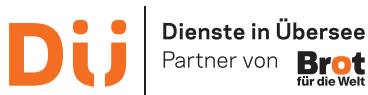
www.wila-arbeitsmarkt.de/abo/

The next transfer

The next issue of *transfer* will focus on the topic of working in the field of education. If you have any requests, suggestions, or helpful tips, please write to us at:

redaktion@agdd.de

Our member organisations:



Christliche Fachkräfte International



For further information:

www.agdd.de

www.agdd.de/en

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