

# RUNDBRIEF

WALDORF AROUND THE WORLD

Freunde der  
Erziehungskunst  
Rudolf Steiners



## LEARNING TO TEACH: MENTORING

**CHINA** Teacher and Mentor Li Zewu Reports on His Work

**MOLDOVA** A visit to the Waldorf School in Chişinău

**ARGENTINA** A New Kindergarten in the Rain Forest

## About us

Since 1976, the **Friends of Waldorf Education** promote Waldorf schools, kindergartens, social therapy initiatives, curative education facilities and social initiatives in general. Our goal is to open up new educational opportunities to people around the world. We have been pursuing this task quite successfully. So far we have supported more than 600 facilities around the world by forwarding donations and through our volunteering program.

## Areas of work

We support facilities around the world in financial and legal matters and directly **forward donations at 100%** to initiatives abroad. Our **International Relief Fund** allows us to provide quick and urgent support to schools and kindergartens and to support curative educational and social therapeutical facilities with their projects. Through our **educational sponsorship** program, we enable children from disadvantaged families to attend a Waldorf school. We also support the training of teachers and educators with **scholarships**. In cooperation with foundations and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), we collaborate in the funding of **school buildings**. With our **WOW-Day (Waldorf One World) campaign**, we coordinate the fundraising commitment of students for Waldorf initiatives worldwide. In the field of **voluntary service** we arrange opportunities for young people in anthroposophical institutions in Germany and abroad. We are one of the largest civil society organisations in Germany with nearly 1,400 volunteers per year. For the high quality of our voluntary service, we are certified with the Quifd seal of approval. Through the BMZ **“weltwärts” program** and the **International Youth Voluntary Service** we offer opportunities for people to volunteer abroad. The new Federal Voluntary Service is open to international and German volunteers and provides – just like the voluntary social year – the opportunity for a voluntary service in anthroposophical institutions in Germany. Our **Emergency Pedagogy** program helps traumatised people in areas affected by war or natural disaster.

Board members: Nana Göbel, Henning Kullak-Ublick, Bernd Ruf,  
Andreas Schubert

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Dear readers,

For more than 40 years the *Friends of Waldorf Education* have been accompanying the international Waldorf movement with great intensity. And even 100 years after the inauguration of the first Waldorf school one thing has stayed the same: every first Waldorf school in a country, but also every newly founded project is a pioneering venture. Children, parents, but of course also the educators encounter concepts, ideas, and ideals they had not known before.

Experience is a precious commodity, and it is important to us to distribute this important treasure. We do this by constantly getting in touch with the schools, kindergartens, teacher seminars, and curative educational facilities all around the world and through our daily work. This includes enabling mentoring: we take care that experienced educators and teachers supervise newly or soon-to-be founded schools and kindergartens. The mentors' tasks include not only imparting the developmental stages of the child and all the educational tricks, but also getting involved with a country's culture by integrating it into the work. Because of the way each teacher grows alongside his students, mentoring means that not only the students but also the mentors themselves are learning to teach. This implies studying how learning can succeed in a particular country and under specific circumstances.

I am very pleased to present this topic to you in the first newsletter I compiled for the *Friends of Waldorf Education*. A couple of months ago, I began managing public relations for the *Friends of Waldorf Education*, which also involves editing the newsletter. In this period, I was able to learn a lot and to benefit from my colleagues' experience. A gift I greatly appreciate and which made the work on this issue of the newsletter a great joy for me.

And now I wish you just as much joy in reading it.

Christina Reinthal



## More sense, more warmth

Thoughts by Nana Göbel on current aspects of the work of the *Friends of Waldorf Education* and the global Waldorf movement.

The Zurich developmental pediatrician Remo Largo recently published a book with the title “Das passende Leben” (The life that fits), in which he discusses the question of how healthy development and sustainable learning can take place. The subtitle of the book is “What makes our individuality and how we can live it”. It is a loud call to trust the child who is always willing to learn, to raise it in stable bonds and emotional security—for example, and first and foremost, with the parents—and to accept the willingness to learn in its individual characteristics by focusing on sustainability and not on quick and superficial results.

Remo Largo does not pursue the question what exactly individuality would be, but he describes abundantly how individuality is shaped in the different developmental stages of childhood and adolescence and how role models, sensual experiences, and experiences of will and feeling correspond with predispositions in shaping the individuality. Through the large variety of his observations, teachers can derive methodological suggestions for a child- and development- oriented school, parents can strengthen the confidence in the developmental potential of their children—both aspects appearing to be in his intention. Between the lines, he shows himself to be a real Swiss fighter for freedom in education. The book is very pleasant to read and therefore I recommend it warmly because, in a gracefully straightforward manner—both with regards to content and language—it stands in contrast to the educational concepts of the vast majority of politicians. These politicians are driven by the idea of providing sufficiently prepared human resources for economic development, while Remo Largo has time and leisure to focus on the individual and its needs; and to grant the individual the right to develop according to his own pace and potential.



Board Member Nana Göbel.

In everyday life it is not always easy to achieve this ideal and to organize life and school in a way that the individual potential – which is always in correspondence with the respective people and the environment – can be given complete expression. Particularly in the past year, we had to deal with situations, in our work of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*, where government regulations restricted a free and child-friendly school by curriculum guidelines, tenure legislation, and many other regulations, to an extent that it almost makes you suffocate. Here is an example: Recently we learned that the Federatia Waldorf din Romania (Association of Waldorf Schools in Romania) is asked for approval if a teacher is removed to a state Waldorf School, but not if a principal is appointed to a state Waldorf School. In Romania, since socialist times, every teacher is confirmed anew each year or can apply for a new position to which she will then be assigned; this hasn't changed in the last 25 years. All of this happens centrally. So the education department in Bucharest decides who is supposed to work in a village in Maramureș or on the Black Sea coast. A swamp, of course, as those who have connections



can arrange for the best, most comfortable, and most enjoyable position. Fortunately, many years ago the Federatia Waldorf agreed with the education department that Waldorf teachers have to have certain skills and they have to be confirmed by the Federatia. Unfortunately, the Waldorf community had failed to stipulate this also for principals – and state Waldorf Schools have to have a principal like any other state school. When the education department now appointed a principal and a vice principal without a hint of Waldorf knowledge or Waldorf experience to one of the four sound Waldorf Schools of the country, this caused a lot of agitation. At the time of writing, it was uncertain whether the schools would have to take legal action or whether the agreed-upon support in the negotiations with the education department will lead to success.

The examples of how state regulations can constrain life in alternative schools and sometimes even rule it out entirely can be continued indefinitely – all around the world. But sometimes, and this is far more painful, we suffocate each other. There are obstacles for the work of alternative schools from the outside as well as from the inside. The obstacles from the inside are often related to misconceptions concerning self-administration and to a lack of willingness to make the wellbeing of all the others at least as much of a priority as your own. Self-administration actually means perceiving the potential of the other and promoting it. To speak with Remo Largo, the idea of self-administration means shaping the “fitting life” (for oneself and for others) in an autonomous way. And in theory, of course, everything is good and unproblematic. It is, however, quite different when you really practice self-administration. Then the behavior is often interlaced with rancor, hiding behind nice words, and power games are presented as beneficial for the community. With a view to the next hundred years of Waldorf Schools, it will certainly play a major role to which extent government regulations enable alternative schools. There will always be situations in which the alternative school sector

cannot be maintained due to external reasons, but the life of Waldorf Schools will be decided by the question as to how the people involved can shape their community life.

In the past few months there have been more and more requests from kindergartens and schools in smaller cities of countries where until now Waldorf education had mainly been anchored in the main cities. Thus, for example, some young parents started a Waldorf Kindergarten in El Calafate at the southern tip of Argentina and regularly invited interested people to talks. The next training center is far, so they decided to invite speakers from Buenos Aires to the tourist town located at the foot of the Andes.

A different group started a Kindergarten in the province of Misiones in the far northeast, where Argentina extends between Brazil and Paraguay along the rivers. But Waldorf Kindergartens also develop in the big cities of the Latin American continent, as in Petropolis, in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. While Waldorf education can look back on a long history of success in Argentina and Brazil, initiatives in Ecuador are very young. We were able to help two schools in the metropolitan area of Quito by putting them in contact with two experienced mentors. One of the schools, Nina Pacha, has already been set up to seventh grade, and the other one, El Puente de Rudolf Steiner, has just started by teaching a small number of children in a remodeled residential house in La Armenia in the capital’s south. Also in Central America, more and more Waldorf initiatives are appearing. So, for example, we were able to support the training of the teachers for the new Waldorf School in San José, Costa Rica. To begin with, a kindergarten class started in September 2017 in a specially repurposed house, and next year the school will start with a first grade. To prepare for the task, eleven colleagues studied Waldorf education together with Svenja Büntjen during the last three years in three full-day meetings per month and worked intensively in the artistic subjects. Most of the other Waldorf initiatives in Central America are not quite as solidly prepared.



The Joys of Winter: Children of the Kindergarten in Calafate, Argentina.



In Misiones, Argentina, volunteers from Germany have built up a kindergarten (middle left). In fall, mentors started their work in Quito, Ecuador. They are working with the Waldorf Schools in Nina Pacha (left) and El Puente (upper right).



The rise of the movement there can also be seen in the number of students at the block training in Cuernavaca, Mexico. Over two hundred participants came to Cuernavaca this summer to prepare themselves for their educational work, mainly from Mexico but also from Guatemala. Some are considering establishing full-time training in these countries. In other areas, too, new initiatives are either formed or existing ones consolidated. In this manner, we are very happy to help the kindergarten in Dakar, Senegal, to build a more solid basis. After we supported the kindergarten teacher in financing her



training in Kassel, Germany, we were now able to support her in remodeling the building in Dakar. We shall see what will become of the plans in Rabat and Marrakesh, where a number of women are thinking of founding a school. The initiative of Natalie Kux in Luxor, Egypt, also belongs in this context. Here, some children, who otherwise would not have been able to attend school at all, are already attending school with great enthusiasm. A pilot project with great influence if it turns out to be successful.

We were very pleased that we could also support the first Waldorf School in Ho Chih Minh City, Viet Nam. Initially, this school will be a home school, since everything else is impossible. The highly enthusiastic mothers did their utmost, but finally needed our support to shoulder the high construction costs. Colleagues from Australia are helping to prepare the teachers. Our dear Helen Cock of the Waldorf teacher-training center in Melbourne is coordinating these efforts.

These few examples show how new initiatives need the courage, the vision, and the self-assertion of only a few people, to take root and shape places where kindergartens and schools can become places of culture, which can offer more sense, more warmth, and more hope to the life of many people.

*Nana Göbel*



### **From the work of the voluntary services**

It was already evident in the spring issue of our newsletter that the services abroad were going to continue the positive trend of the previous years and would once again hold their ground in the field of voluntary services, against the general and demographic development. Now that all volunteers have started their services, we can confirm this trend. The new cooperation program with our neighbors on the left bank of the Rhine, the “Service Civique”, has started its first full season with an own seminar group. For this program, a French volunteer doing his service in Germany and a German supporting a French facility form a team and get to meet each other several times at seminars.

At the time of the editorial deadline, we did not have the final numbers of volunteers in Germany, but here too we can assume another increase. We have reached agreements concerning the voluntary social year (FSJ) with almost all German states. The facilities can now better plan ahead, as they can cover their ever-growing demand for volunteers both with incoming and local services. All of our colleagues supervising the voluntary services in Germany—local, incoming, and international—are happy about the new community building. The new office building of the *Friends* in Karlsruhe now unites all departments in one location and will allow us to develop new synergy potential.

*Christoph Herrmann*

### **From the work of the emergency pedagogy**

In 2017, teams for emergency pedagogy traveled to war zones and crisis areas as well as to training events. In this manner, we aim not only to help quickly on site, but also to help people prepare for disasters and thus enable them to act in case of emergency. From June 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, the Sixth Emergency Pedagogical Annual Conference took place under the title of “War, Debris and Trauma”. Interested people met in Karlsruhe to further their knowledge on the subject of manmade catastrophes in talks and workshops. Together, they investigated questions of how manmade catastrophes affect children’s lives and their development and of how emergency and trauma pedagogy can help them.

The situation in West Africa also matters to us. Not only draught and hunger, but also social problems are forcing people to flee. Every day, thousands arrive in the refugee camps. In cooperation with the Waldorf-Kakuma-Project, which emerged from the emergency pedagogical missions of 2012-2014, we carried out a first mission in June. Another one is planned for late October. In Nepal, emergency pedagogical teams have frequently been active since the devastating earthquake of 2015. In February, a team was on site. The next aftercare mission will take place in November.

In summer, the good news we had hoped for arrived for our long-term project in Iraq. The German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH (GIZ) has granted another year of funding. In addition to the work with children, the focus now lies on state recognition for trauma education training in Kurdistan. In addition to the existing contingent of local collaborators, we are going to train another 30 professionals. The core group, which has been working since the beginning for FEW, will work as trainers and pass on their knowledge and their experience. In addition, we are planning to support the work of two orphanages in the city of Dohuk and to continue our university seminars on the subject of trauma and trauma pedagogy for aspiring teachers and psychologists.

In May, our training for emergency educators got off to a good start with its first group. The program aims to provide intensive training on the subject of trauma and to impart well-founded knowledge. The participants will be able to work as emergency educators and to pass on their knowledge.

**FRIENDS OF WALDORF EDUCATION 01.01.2016 to 31.12.2016 in Euro**

ALLOCATION OF FUNDS		2016	2015	SOURCE OF FUNDING		2016	2015
<b>A. INTERNATIONALER HILFSFONDS</b>							
				Donations		2.087.932,97	1.945.926,52
				Schools/ Kindergartens/ Curative Education		116.767,68	255.476,92
Waldorf Schools/ Kindergartens	1.838.066,89	1.776.603,51		Special campaign WOW-Day		395.310,64	225.024,99
Training/ Seminars/ Scholarships	395.310,05	523.055,07		Special campaigns		17.853,46	21.698,97
Curative education/ Social therapy, social work	870.278,06	961.735,17		Special campaigns/ Placement Funds		1.703,33	736,20
Supraregional tasks	153.091,60	124.016,44		Foundations and others		1.153.939,39	1.388.453,99
Subtotal	3.256.746,60	3.385.410,19		Government grants BMZ		120.480,00	0,00
Special purpose catalog/video	797,30	420,00		Subtotal		3.893.987,47	3.837.317,59
Use of government grants	5.493,29	22.785,00		Special purpose catalog/video		0,00	46,74
Reclassification to emergency pedagogy Nepal	4.247,38	125.000,00		Release of provision for guarantee		17.231,87	0,00
Loan default (Israel fund)	16.346,74	0,00		Liqu. Israel Fund (bc. of loan and banking charges)		16.569,79	0,00
Increase Israel Fund from capital gains	7.033,90	0,00		Capital gains (Israel fund)		7.033,90	0,00
<b>Outflow int. aid fund</b>	<b>3.290.665,21</b>	<b>3.533.615,19</b>		<b>Inflow int. aid fund</b>		<b>3.934.823,03</b>	<b>3.837.364,33</b>
<b>Work of the association (int. aid fund)</b>							
				Member contributions		167.643,17	174.286,31
				Donations		147.371,56	133.305,68
				Reimbursements		1.536,22	4.348,10
				Exceptional income		175,63	0,00
				Administrative share of government grants (BMZ)		5.493,29	22.785,00
Personnel costs	331.167,25	340.480,38		Interest/ other income		85.889,82	119.320,07
Material costs	147.658,57	152.515,91		Business operations		6.704,85	0,00
Costs asset management	338,30	299,63		Subtotal		414.814,54	454.045,16
Subtotal	479.164,12	493.295,92		Release of pension provisions		52.150,92	0,00
Allocation to reserve fund	0,00	16.400,30		Dissolution of reserves		12.198,66	55.651,06
<b>Outflow operations</b>	<b>479.164,12</b>	<b>509.696,22</b>		<b>Inflow operations</b>		<b>479.164,12</b>	<b>509.696,22</b>
<b>B. NOTFALLPÄDAGOGIK</b>							
Refugees int. (Iraq/Syria)	694.049,13	260.879,24		Donations		270.667,84	175.270,58
Other missions (Nepal etc.)	84.684,85	72.563,42		Reclassification to emergency pedagogy Nepal		4.247,38	125.000,00
Philippines	52.196,47	45.375,02		"Deutschland hilft" campaign		225.898,21	373.809,20
Refugees EU (Greece/Slovenia)	8.046,40	41.082,66		UNICEF/ NGOs		400.296,64	178.963,87
International seminars on emergency pedagogy	42.814,52	27.106,34		Government grants/ GIZ		477.376,09	0,00
Gaza	3.872,08	11.163,81		Reimbursements		4.438,68	1.144,52
Other overhead expenditure	1.225,68	23.196,41		Other income		48.989,51	27.138,22
Foreign Office repayment	0,00	4.524,17		Business operations		12.823,23	0,00
Project expenses	886.889,13	485.891,07		Subtotal		1.444.737,58	881.326,39
Personnel costs	345.963,01	195.178,09		Dissolution of reserves		0,00	0,00
Material costs	126.834,41	48.297,27		<b>Inflow emergency pedagogy</b>		<b>1.444.737,58</b>	<b>881.326,39</b>
<b>Outflow emergency pedagogy</b>	<b>1.359.686,55</b>	<b>729.366,43</b>					
<b>C. FREIWILLIGENDIENSTE AUSLAND</b>							
Travel expenses	629.194,19	558.320,52		Supporter circles and donations		1.845.932,95	1.545.026,34
Insurance	433.365,16	370.688,40		Government grants		3.753.174,99	3.550.242,94
Pocket Money	842.138,44	726.445,48		Foreing placement facilities		293.666,72	230.281,35
Room and board allowance	462.851,59	449.212,69		Reimbursements		58,75	428,92
Seminars, Alumni work, etc.	974.615,88	953.187,16		Contributions to expenses by volunteers		9.973,11	7.124,49
Non-eligible program costs	72,43	50,61		Interest		169,02	3.390,53
"Weltwärts – und danach" program	34.964,73	31.335,57		Subtotal		5.902.975,54	5.336.494,57
Repayment public funds	11.685,82	92.280,47		Dissolution of reserves		83.555,70	82.384,55
Project costs	3.388.888,24	3.181.520,90		<b>Inflow volunteering abroad</b>		<b>5.986.531,24</b>	<b>5.418.879,12</b>
Placement funds/Help funds	1.703,33	736,20					
Expenses for the new building	0,00	82.384,55					
Personnel costs	1.797.504,79	1.737.183,63					
Material costs	450.348,96	407.968,33					
Subtotal	5.638.445,32	5.409.793,61					
Allocation to reserve fund	178.085,92	211.788,07					
<b>Outflow volunteering abroad</b>	<b>5.816.531,24</b>	<b>5.621.581,68</b>					
<b>D. FREIWILLIGENDIENSTE INLAND</b>							
Seminars/ pedagogical support	1.413.756,49	1.154.077,70		Donations/ Air travel fund		8.432,00	8.465,95
Air travel funding	37.109,53	24.318,34		Grants		23.000,00	3.681,52
Project costs	1.450.866,02	1.178.396,04		Government grants		1.201.327,03	1.056.167,39
Pocket money + SV	2.257.071,39	1.764.679,20		Reimbursement – TG/RK		2.256.161,19	1.784.594,66
Personnel costs	1.453.700,15	1.272.413,16		Domestic placement facilities		2.085.083,30	1.782.844,67
Material costs	400.627,51	362.673,66		Reimbursements		0,00	817,40
Subtotal	5.562.265,07	4.578.162,06		Contributions from volunteers		1.003,00	225,00
Allocation to reserve fund	12.989,49	58.928,02		Interest		79,97	289,86
<b>Outflow domestic volunteering</b>	<b>5.575.254,56</b>	<b>4.637.090,08</b>		Business operations sponsoring		168,07	0,00
				<b>Inflow domestic volunteering</b>		<b>5.575.254,56</b>	<b>4.637.086,45</b>



**FINANCIAL REPORT 2016**

**The Friends by Numbers**

For more than 40 years, the Friends of Waldorf Education have been working towards a free education system. It is important to us to create awareness for how we spend our money. The donor her- or himself decides how the money is to be used and which institution abroad is to be supported. In our annual financial report, we provide an overview of where our money came from and where it went in 2016.

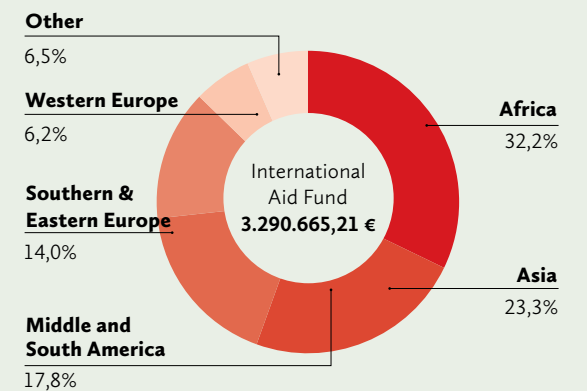
Last year we were able to support 239 institutions abroad and 48 students with a total of 3,3 M€ from our International Aid Fund. Here, we primarily support schools and kindergarten that have to get by with very little, or in some cases even no, state subsidies.

About one third of the outflow (€ 1.1 M) went to Africa, especially to South Africa, Namibia, Tanzania, Kenya and Sierra Leone. Especially important was the support for the Imhoff Waldorf School in Fishhoek/South Africa, the Zenzeleni Waldorf School in Khayelitsha/South Africa, the Waldorf School Windhoek/Namibia, the Mbagathi Steiner School in Nairobi/Kenia, the Goderich Waldorf School in Freetown/Sierra Leone, the Hekima Waldorf School in Dar Es Salaam/Tanzania and the newly founded Hebet el Nil school initiative in Luxor/Egypt. With our support, we made it possible for children to attend the school whose parents are

not able to come up with the school fees. We are especially invested in training the teachers, who often have to travel far in order to extend their proficiency in Waldorf Education. Beside our direct support for the Centre for Creative Education in Cape Town/South Africa (€ 81 K) and for the East African Teacher Training in Nairobi/Kenia (€ 21 K), we also contributed to the travel expenses for teachers from Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam.

We were able to transfer € 768 K to Asia, of which €146 Kalone went to Nepal, to the Tashi Waldorf School and the PAORC orphanage. With support from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), we were able to expand the wood shop, and set up a bakery, a café, and a market garden at the social therapy facility Mayr in Yerevan/Armenia (€ 52 K).

Allocation of funds by regions





# Voluntary Services and Emergency Pedagogy

The field of **emergency pedagogy** has grown further, and the concomitant expenditures have risen to €1.3 M (last year: €730 K). The revenues mainly come from partner organizations and state subsidies. These are sufficient to cover the immediate costs for the missions abroad. It is much harder to finance the basic costs, in particular salaries. We initiated fundraising activities, which increased the amount of donations received to €270 K (last year: €175 K). Donations amounted to 19% of the revenues.

**Voluntary Services abroad:** The number of volunteers abroad increased to 763, which is a significant increase by 67 volunteers (+10%) compared to last year. The €5.6 M spent were mainly financed through state subsidies. The placement facilities could only contribute little to the costs, and so donations collected by the volunteers (€1.8 M) form the second major source of revenues.

**Domestic Voluntary Services:** In 2016, 832 volunteers began their service in Germany, that is 42 more (+5%) than in the previous year. The costs of €5.6 M were mainly covered by the placement facilities in Germany (€2.1 M), government grants (€1.2 M) and reimbursement of pocket money and travel expenses by the placement facilities (€2.2 M).

Emergency Pedagogy		
	Children reached	Adults reached
<b>Missions: 11</b>		
Paris	0	30
Brussels	0	50
Ecuador earthquake	620	440
Gaza	100	20
Haiti	820	140
Nepal	200	50
Philippines	0	100
Iraq (four missions)	1080	165
<b>People reached</b>	<b>2820</b>	<b>995</b>
<b>Seminars: 29</b>	Particip.	
Slovenia	40	
South America (Columbia, Brazil)	250	
Chile	50	
3 seminars abroad	340	
26 domestic seminars	1985	
<b>Total participants</b>	<b>2325</b>	

Voluntary services abroad		
By program	2016	2015
Development volunteer service (weltwärts)	231	154
Voluntary year abroad (FJA)	532	542
Total number of volunteers	763	696

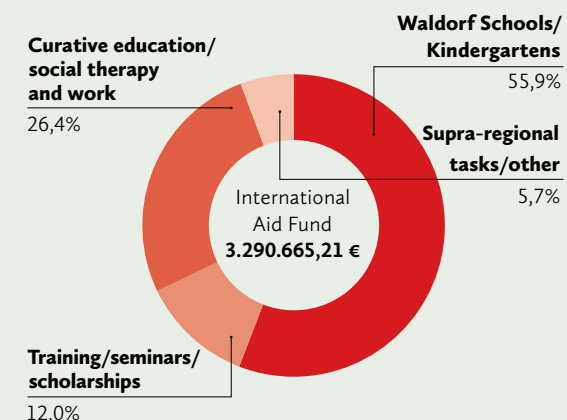
Domestic voluntary services		
By programs	2016	2015
German Federal Volunteers Service (BFD)	488	450
Voluntary Social Year (FSJ)	154	150
Incoming	190	190
Total number of volunteers	832	790

International Aid Fund	
Projects supported in 2016	
Waldorf Schools	110
Waldorf Kindergartens	27
Curative education and social therapy	39
Social work	21
Teacher training centers	26
Others and supraregional	16
Total number of projects	239
Grants-in-aid for foreign students	48

The second project that we co-finance with the BMZ is the curative education community Khedeli in Signaghi/Georgia, where we supported the construction of a new building, to be used for housing and therapy, with €78 K. €66K went to Baddegama/Sri Lanka for the curative education kindergarten and the acquisition of a parcel of land for the social therapy community. We transferred €61 K to Bangkok/Thailand for the construction of the new Panyotai Kindergarten; €10 K went to Seoul/South Korea towards the construction of a school. €10 K went to Yerevan for teacher training, €25 K went to the China Waldorf Forum, €4.4 K to Bishkek/Kirgizstan, €8 K to Beirut/Lebanon, €13 K to Istanbul/Turkey. In addition, we covered the travel costs of mentors visiting Myanmar, Singapore, India, and Thailand. We were able to transfer €11 K from educational sponsorships to the kindergartens in Ho Chi Minh City/Vietnam.

The sum total transferred to Middle and South America was €584 K, of which the largest part (€354 K) went to Brazil. Many of the projects we support deal with social work and kindergartens in favelas, barrios, and very remote rural areas, dominated by great poverty and lack of prospects.

## Allocation of funds by fields



Their work encourages the children to take their lives into their own hands. As examples, let us mention the work of the AC Monte Azul, the AC Micael, the circus Ponte Estrellas, El Pequeno Principe in São Paulo, the Fundação Pavel in Barão de Grajaú and the Projeto Salva Dor in Bahia. Further social projects, which were primarily supported through WOW-Day are the CES Waldorf in Bogotá/Colombia, Estrella de Sauce in Tarapoto/Peru, and Cultivarte in San Fernando/Argentina. We also supported and closely accompanied the Caracol School in Guatemala and the École du Village in Haiti.

€460 K went to Southern and Eastern Europe, and €204 K to Western Europe. We supported several schools in construction projects: Johannese Kool Rosma/Estonia, Brasov and Iasi in Romania, Voronezh/Russia, Budapest-Rakosmenti and Váci in Hungary, Bristol/Great Britain, Palermo/Italy, Bellaterra, Vic and Vitoria Gasteiz in Spain. Our other main focus lay on supporting teacher training and associations in Eastern Europe, e.g., in Romania, Russia, and Hungary.



Educational sponsorships
812 sponsors
656 sponsored children/classes
60 projects supported
€27.388 /mo.; €329 K/yr



WOW Day 2016
163 participating schools
From 29 countries
39 projects supported
From 19 countries

### Revenues in the International Aid Fund

The International Relief Fund and the work of the association are primarily financed by donations. Our donors decide how and where the money is to be used. We forward 100 percent of the donations to the intended institutions abroad. Only when donations are expressly declared as being for our work do we use them to cover our personnel and non-personnel costs. How we use this money is entirely transparent as we give the costs and revenues for the work of the association separately under the heading "International Relief Fund." Last year, we received € 3.9M for the direct support of institutions abroad, of which € 2.1 M came from private donations. Adding the donations by Waldorf schools and kindergartens from WOW-Day and other fundraising campaigns, one sees that two thirds of the revenues for the International Relief Fund originate from donations. An additional 30 percent are donations from foundations, with only 3 percent of the funds coming from state support (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, BMZ).

163 schools in 29 countries organized a WOW-Day in 2016. Behind these figures are active students, entire classes and school communities, who committed themselves to the worldwide Waldorf movement for an entire day by collecting money in many different ways. Last but not least, there are the dedicated teachers who organize the WOW-Days. From these activities, we received € 395K in the past year, which helped us to support 39 initiatives in 19 countries. (For more information on WOW-Day, please see page 34.)

### Work of the association

The costs for our work in support of the International Aid Fund amounted to € 479K (€ 493 K in the previous year). This amount is divided into personnel costs of € 331K (69 percent) and non-personnel costs of € 148K (31 percent). The latter figure includes, e.g., € 55K for printing and shipping the newsletter and € 70K for running the WOW-Day campaign are included in the latter figure. Travel expenses account for € 29K.

Of course, we try to resolve as many questions as possible per email, but face-to-face conversations and the immediate impression on site remain essential. This would not be possible without travel expenses.

The financing of our work is completely separated from the donations for the international school movement, of which we forward 100 percent to initiatives abroad. If we want to compare the adequacy of our costs with other organizations, we need to relate the costs for our work to the revenues for the International Aid Fund and the work of the association. For comparison: The expenses for advertisement/public relations and management in organizations with Seal-of-Approval are allowed to consume up to 30 percent of the revenues. In our case, public relations (including newsletter, WOW-Day and educational sponsorships) consume 5.59 percent, the costs for administration an additional 3.6 percent.

In 2016, more than 4000 people donated for institutions abroad. They form a big warming circle around the Waldorf teachers and the children, who often live in difficult economic conditions. When we sit together in the office of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*, folding and putting stamps on the many donation confirmations, I am always filled with amazement at the number of our friends and with gratitude for their help. These feelings are joined by humility, for we are not able to create this circle of friends. We can report on developments and difficulties abroad, initiate campaigns, facilitate educational sponsorships, help channel donations, and ask for donations, but by ourselves there is little we can achieve.

*Eleonore Jungheim*



In 2016, our revenues fell to € 414K. The main causes are to be found in the political environment. Within the context of their expansionary monetary policy, the ECB lowered the interest rates drastically. For us, this resulted in a further decline in interest income, which fell to € 86K. Ten years ago, our interest income was twice as high, funding half of our work. In addition to that, the BMZ ceased its funding of school buildings, further complicating matters. The loss of this essential financial resource for the building of schools and curative education facilities abroad implies a further reduction of income in our budget, as we also no longer receive the overhead costs associated with the BMZ support. This development has been looming ahead, and we managed to work on the efficiency of our spending. The gap between expenses and revenues was € 64.349,58. We were able to compensate this deficit to a large part by releasing a pension provision. Now we must see how we can proceed.

Internationally, there are very few organizations that can help Waldorf Schools, Kindergartens and curative education facilities, teacher training cen-

ters or foreign students in case of need. Several foundations have had to reduce their commitment due to a fall in interest income; smaller funds are focusing on fewer projects. Due to these developments, the *Friends of Waldorf Education* have become the most important port of call with regards to requests for assistance. The number of requests we receive underscores this. In July 2007, we discussed 17 requests in our board meeting; in July 2017 there were 40.

The Waldorf Schools in Germany can cover two thirds of their running costs through state subsidies. The German Association of Waldorf Schools (Bund der Freien Waldorfschulen) advises and accompanies school start-up initiatives. Sadly, the situation abroad is completely different; in most cases the entire burden of financing lies upon parents and teachers, who often can raise the running costs only with great effort. The international schools need every single donation, and that is why we do not want to charge you for the administration of the donations or for procuring and advising educational sponsors.

Of course, costs do arise with us, also in order for us to meet the legal requirements for a charitable organization, allowing us to issue donation receipts in the first place. This is why we are looking for donations to finance our work and have launched the "10 percent campaign". In addition, our members support our work on a regular basis.

The Waldorf movement is growing, and with this our tasks are growing. For our work to flourish, we need allies, who enjoy seeing Waldorf education grow and who see the need for supporting young initiatives; friends who help us to support teachers and parents in other countries that want a Waldorf education for their children.



A playhouse for the children of the Tashi Waldorf School in Nepal.

## Forwarding 100 % And financing our work

Since 1971, we are succeeding in forwarding all earmarked donations at 100% to projects abroad. In order for this to succeed in the future, we kindly ask for your support.

There are several possibilities for doing this:

→ Join the **10% campaign** by donating 10% for the work of the *Friends of Waldorf Education* in addition to your earmarked donation.

→ Become a **supporting member** by donating an amount of your choosing on a regular basis. This provides a dependable foundation for our work.

→ You can help us with a **single donation** for our work.

→ A more effective way to secure our work even for the children of coming generations is to **include us in your will** as a beneficiary (I would be happy to advise you on this matter, please give me a call: +49 30 / 6170 26-30, Eleonore Jungheim).

**Only with donations from people who have confidence in our work, can we help.**

Therefore, our sincere request:  
*Stay committed.*



Two of the many projects, we were able to support in 2016: The curative education facility in Mayri, Armenia, (above) and Monte Azul in São Paulo

## Conference with daily lead-ups

In spring, the 7th Asian Waldorf Teachers Conference took place in Chengdu, capital of the Chinese province of Sichuan. It was the concluding meeting of a cycle of seven conferences, which began in 2005 and was initiated and accompanied by the *Friends of Waldorf Education* to support the collaboration and structure of the Asian movement. Dirk Rohde participated in the conference as a lecturer. For us, he has provided a sketch of the unique atmosphere.

For seven days we had a great festival, very intense, full of inspiring discussions, talks, impressions. Approximately 900 teachers and educators attended the conference. The largest contingent came from China and was complemented by a number of smaller and larger delegations from the surrounding Asian countries. Much praise is due to Nana Göbel and Christof Wiechert. Nana initiated the entire cycle of conferences, which has now seen seven installments: every other year in a different country. With each installment, the number of participants increased. And so, every time more organization and more financial assistance were needed. It is an exemplary feat to have wholeheartedly carried on with this enterprise for such a long time. Christof Wiechert, former chair of the Pedagogical Section, always accompanied Nana. At all seven conferences, he held a series of lectures. Every morning, he shared his deep pedagogical insights, garnished with a lot of humor. His presentations joined together like pearls on a string and gave each conference a coherent character. Every day, he provided a lead-up to which I as a lecturer could perfectly link my daily presentation of the chemistry curriculum. In my opinion, “cultural identity”, which was one of the conference topics alongside “individualization in the practice of pedagogy”, is one of the key challenges that the worldwide Waldorf movement needs to meet in order to consolidate and grow further. You may find important reflections by Neil Boland on this topic on [www.waldorf-resources.org](http://www.waldorf-resources.org). The question, as to which elements of the

European Waldorf education can be transferred to Asia, was omnipresent. Obviously, those questions arise when it comes to mother tongue, history, fairy tales, and myths. But it also came up in chemistry. The four Greek elements and the Goethean concept of polarity and augmentation on which we continuously build our classes in Europe are significantly different from the five Chinese elements and the concept of Yin-Yang, while at the same time exhibiting clear similarities. To adapt these latter concepts to the Waldorf chemistry curriculum was extraordinary enriching.

The second central question for me was why exactly the Waldorf movement in China is growing so rapidly. The general explanation—that the Chinese University Entrance Exam is very strict and therefore leads parents from the emerging middle class to look for alternatives for their children—is in any case not sufficient, as we can see from the similar example of India. In my view, the best explanation is the Chinese pragmatism. If they see that something holds water, works well and seems promising, it is adopted and implemented. As long as the government does not make any difficulties, one can fully benefit from the current sense of new beginnings. The next acid test will be when many of the new Chinese schools reach high school and with this the state exams. The teacher training centers have started to prepare for this task.

*Dr. Dirk Rohde is a high school teacher at Freie Waldorfschule Marburg and lecturer for Waldorf education.*

## A conscious African voice

In April, the South African Federation of Waldorf Schools, hosted a special annual meeting at the Michael Mount Waldorf School in Johannesburg: for the first time the annual meeting of the Waldorf-educational initiatives of South Africa was open to the other African countries. And several representatives from East Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe accepted this invitation. Joyful exchanges ensued.

The Waldorf School received the name of Michael Mount when it was built atop the flat hills of Bryanstone. Today, mansions surrounded by high walls and English landscape gardens dominate the neighborhood. When the school moved here, the area still lay outside Johannesburg’s city limits and thus was affordable. Things have changed a lot. The fancy neighborhood now also attracts the corresponding sort of parents. Several spots in the higher grades are reserved for students from the Inkanyezi Waldorf School, reflecting the school’s social aspirations. Apart from that, the contrast between the prime location for wealthy Johannesburgers in Bryanstone and the huts of the intra-African refugees right next to the Inkanyezi School in Alexandra could not be any greater. Everyone, whether poor or rich, black or white, urban or rural, was invited to Johannesburg for the so-called Pan African Waldorf Teachers Conference. William Bester, administrator of the Michael Mount Waldorf School and coordinator of the Council of the South African Federation of Waldorf Schools, followed his dream of bringing the entire African Waldorf School Movement together for once. One might say to give the Waldorf movement a conscious African voice, which is able to express the concerns of the continent. It remained a dream for now, for, apart from one representative from East Africa and a few colleagues from Zimbabwe, the call went unheeded due to the various local situations. But it does need a dream, so that one day we can hear an African solo in the choir of the Waldorf World.

The kindergarten and school teachers of the South African Waldorf Movement came in great numbers, also because they could look forward to talks by Florian Osswald (Pedagogical Section at the Goetheanum), Bernd Ruf (*Friends of Waldorf Education*), Clara Aerts (International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education / IASWECE) und Martyn Rawson (Waldorf School Elmshorn), which promised an overview over all the important aspects of the different life stages and of the most important challenges we face in our times. William Bester supplemented these presentations with reports from his political work for the South African Waldorf Movement. No easy task, as the officials in Pretoria are certainly not pleased when what they consider to be a “private school movement” comes with some special requests (even simple questions concerning the curriculum, which simply need to be discussed). Thankfully, Sylvester Msimanga, principal of the Lesedi Waldorf School in Madietane supported these negotiations. When the first songs arose in the auditorium, one could hear, in the back rows, the rhythmic singing of the teachers from the centers for early childhood education in the still existing townships. An entirely different reality, ringing mightily, on solid ground. Whether the content of the presentations had anything to do with their soul experiences, their questions, and their ways of surviving? In any case, this meeting showed that it will take a while until an African Waldorf Education can take root not only in the cities, but also in rural areas.

*Nana Göbel*



## A direct connection: Educational sponsorships

With the help of educational sponsorships, the *Friends of Waldorf Education* can offer continuous support to individual students. For the *Friends of Waldorf Education*, Fabian Michel oversees the connections between school, sponsors and the sponsored children or classes. During a visit to the Waldorf School in Chişinău, Moldova, he learned once more how valuable this work is.

For 19 years now, the *Friends of Waldorf Education* have been providing educational sponsorships. It became increasingly clear to us that Waldorf schools abroad face one vast and important challenge: to admit children to the schools regardless of their financial background. Many parents can only procure the tuition and fees under great difficulties, but would love to make Waldorf education possible for their children to ensure a healthy upbringing. The purpose of my work with the *Friends* clearly consists in helping Waldorf schools with this challenge. I firmly believe that Waldorf schools cannot be alternative private schools for the “rich and famous”.

I spend a great deal of my work with excel charts. To be honest, I would hardly see a sense in excel charts, if it was not for the good cause. In this case, they help me bring together educational sponsors and godchildren. In addition to that, I often speak on the phone – for example with educational sponsors or with my contact persons at the schools – and I read reports on the schools. When I have started working for the *Friends*, I became aware that the running costs of a Waldorf school could become a persistent problem, in particular abroad. In most countries, Waldorf schools receive only little or even no state funding. One can form only a very limited opinion of the actual situation at a Waldorf School by reading a report or an article. Therefore, I am always grateful when people who have been on site lend me their support. In this way, I can better assess the situation. In May of this year, I was fortunate to myself visit one of the schools in our partner program.

And so I went to Moldova and was warmly welcomed by the teachers, students and parents of the Waldorf School Chişinău. The little country of Moldova is the poorest in Europe. The Waldorf School in Chişinău was founded in 1992 and is one of the first alternative schools and still the only Waldorf School of this country. There are 562 students at this school and three kindergarten groups with 78 children. Grades one to seven have two classes each (two tracks). From eighth grade on, there is at present only one track for each grade. The school could immediately change from one track to two tracks in the upper grades. The applications far outnumber the possible admissions. There is not enough room to meet the needs. The lack of trained teachers is another big problem, especially in the foreign languages of German, English and French.

Although I do not understand Romanian, I was deeply impressed by the atmosphere the Romanian teacher created during the class: Concentrated work mixed with a lot of laughter and cordiality. Using the German teacher as a translator, I conducted a long conversation with the Romanian teacher. She told me about her work at the school and also that her daughter, who is a student at this school, suffers from cataracts. Together we decided to include her in our partnership program. You will find her description along with a picture on page 43 of this newsletter.

Lidia Directorova is the German teacher at the school. During my visit she made a lot of time for me. From the beginning, she has been the one at this school to put me into contact with the

sponsored children. Lidia Directorova officially retired two years ago, but is still active with great commitment. Sometimes I wait impatiently here in the office for a response from a school. My view has changed completely, now that I witnessed firsthand how a contact person like Lidia Directorova not only dedicates herself fully to teaching but also commits herself to defending the many interests of the school, such as by submitting applications to foundations or by organizing special events. It also became clear to me how important it is to support Waldorf Schools that do not have a professional fundraising team because they do not have the financial means.

One of the highlights of my trip was the medieval festival of the school. The commitment and the close relationship between students, teachers, and parents became immediately evident. The songs the music teacher had rehearsed with her students, parents who had sewed costumes and participated as king and queen in the medieval festival – these were wonderful moments. At the festival, former students greeted their teachers with a smile and a warm hug. This is certainly the result of truly living the ideal of a close-knit school community.

It was even more thought provoking to me when I learnt that retired teachers receive a pension equivalent to about 60 Euros per month. Not enough to make ends meet – not even in Moldova.

I had a special conversation with a girl from 10<sup>th</sup> grade. The girl has been very lucky to receive support from an educational sponsorship since the first grade. Through phone calls with her sponsor I had learned that there is a lively exchange. The girl



confirmed this to me and even showed me touching post cards she had received from Germany. I talked to this girl for an hour in fluent English. When I asked her about her wishes for the future, she told me with beaming eyes that she absolutely wants to become an art therapist. I am sure that this strong and hardworking girl will be able to make her dream come true.

More than 800 educational sponsors are enabling schools to meet the important social responsibility of opening the school gates to all children, as far as possible. We would be very pleased to welcome more people, companies or school classes as educational sponsors in order to support Waldorf Schools in this ongoing challenge.

*I look forward to receiving an email (f.michel@freunde-waldorf.de) or a phone call from you.*

*Fabian Michel*



# IMPRESSIONS FROM MOLDOVA

In the small country of Moldova, the poorest country in Europe, the Waldorf School Chişinău, founded in 1992, was one of the first alternative schools and is to this day the only Waldorf School. Fabian Michel, responsible for educational sponsorship program of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*, visited the school this spring – you will find his report on the two preceding pages (20–21).





## Learning to Teach: A Mentor's Work

Establishing a Waldorf School or Kindergarten in a country that has little or no expertise in Waldorf Education is a special challenge, which can be met much better if experienced educators support the young team. But the mentors do a lot more than pass on knowledge; they also assist in the communal process of working out how to integrate the culture and the specificities of the country into Waldorf education.

A little Waldorf School recently opened in Zanzibar, because the young Australian Judi Palmer was horrified by the conditions in the island's schools and wanted to create an alternative, especially for children from poor working class families. She had heard of Waldorf education in Australia, but did not really know it. She had a feeling deep inside her that Waldorf education would meet the emotional and spiritual needs of these children, who usually oscillate between the intellectual education at the state schools and the Islamic teaching at the madrasa. So she began looking for teachers and to send some of them to Nairobi with the support of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*.

How does such an initiative turn into a Waldorf school, when none of the teachers has ever experienced a functioning Waldorf school? The only possibility consists in finding experienced Waldorf teachers (mentors) and asking them to continuously accompany such a school. Their tasks include accompanying the teachers in class, which of course forms the basis for all of the other duties. Together with the teachers, the mentors must develop a suitable curriculum, practice the teaching methods, and, most importantly, do artistic work. Concerning the latter, the focus is not primarily on external proficiency in painting or music, but rather on the inner artistic disposition of the teachers. You can only master the art of education if you have this inner artistic disposition. It goes hand in hand with the ability to not only execute a pre-planned class, but also to combine the situation of the children with the pre-planned class material to form a new reality that meets the children's needs and allows them to grow, learn, and develop. In addition to

accompanying the individual teachers, the mentors also deal with issues such as school organization and development, working with the parents, and establishing the public image of Waldorf education in the respective town or city.

In many countries, nascent Waldorf schools face exactly the same situation as in Zanzibar. The *Friends of Waldorf Education* are asked time and again by school initiatives to keep a lookout for people who might be interested in working as a mentor. And we keep on recruiting experienced teachers for such tasks. Several examples. We asked two Israeli Waldorf teachers, husband and wife, to help establish two schools in Quito, Ecuador, which they agreed to do for an entire year. We are deploying two English colleagues to a project in the surroundings of Mandalay, Burma, where they will accompany the establishment of a school, set up teacher training, and provide an example of Waldorf education through their own teaching. We asked a Swiss colleague to do teacher training in Istanbul, Turkey. He will now also accompany the establishment of a Waldorf School in Istanbul. We asked a francophone Waldorf Teacher from Switzerland to provide regular support to the Waldorf School in Les Cayes, Haiti, and he has agreed to this adventure. We are providing financial support to a French Waldorf teacher who is building up the little Darbari Waldorf School in Rajasthan, India. We sent a German colleague to Pune, India, during her sabbatical, where she helped in the consolidation of a school. And we are placing many more colleagues with the the young Chinese Waldorf schools, as the intensive but short Chinese teacher training is by no means sufficient to fully prepare the candidates for



Mentoring in Zanzibarw

their work. Only continuous accompaniment brings forth the pedagogical foundation on which a school can succeed.

Now, this does not always work out. Of course, the pioneering teacher and the mentor must develop a relationship of trust, from which the readiness to learn from one another can spring. And if that readiness is not there, it won't work anyway. Any mentor who arrives with the notion that he or she knows how to do it will fail. Only those who are ready to learn turn out to be really helpful and important. The mentors have to meet several additional challenges, besides the usual ones such as empathy, clear ideas, and avoiding typical Waldorf misunderstandings arising from imprecise wording. If one doesn't speak the foreign language, it is rather difficult to establish a relationship with one's colleagues. If one doesn't know the social codes, it is difficult to anticipate reactions to one's own behavior. If one doesn't know the cultural foundation of the country, it is rather hard to develop sensible suggestions for the curricula. So there is much to be learned from one another, and when that happens, mentoring works.

The more the Waldorf movement spreads to all corners of the world – be it in early-childhood education, kindergartens, elementary schools, or higher grades – the more its development will depend on this willingness to support one another.

Only in countries such as China, where the demand is great enough can teacher training facilities be established, even if the training may not be sufficient. In many other large countries, such as India for example, there is still no teacher training. In smaller countries, such as Uruguay, Guatemala, Burma, Nepal, Egypt, Ethiopia, Senegal, Morocco, Ruanda, or Zimbabwe there will be no teacher training in the foreseeable future, so everything depends on the mentors. And even in countries with teacher training, such as Russia, China, Vietnam, Chile, Colombia, Argentina, Mexico, Thailand, the Philippines, Kenya, or Tanzania, not all colleagues manage to attend the intensive courses several time per year, as they are mainly held in the capitals, requiring substantial travel expenses in addition to the tuition. For this reason, mentoring is essential also for those Waldorf initiatives that are situated outside of the capitals. In those countries where the school movement has a somewhat longer tradition, mentors have been recruited domestically, which has the great advantage that they speak the language, know the social codes, and are immediately trusted.

To get an overview of this big Waldorf network, we have established close relations with other organizations, whom we are also asking for mentors, in particular with the pedagogical section at the Goetheanum. But we have also established ties to Australia and New Zealand, from where



more and more mentors are traveling to Asia to accompany entire schools; and to the USA, where many retired Waldorf teachers urgently need money because their pensions are insufficient to make ends meet and are happy to travel to China to support kindergartens and schools. On the one hand, this interconnectedness is beneficial to the Waldorf movement, on the other hand, it makes it possible to trace the origin of unusual points of view and the occasional misinterpretation.

We expect the Waldorf movement to keep on growing steadily in the next years – in the fields both of kindergartens and of schools, in the latter especially with regard to the higher grades. This also means an increasing need to support one another. The privilege of learning from one another thus becomes a wonderful gift.

*Nana Göbel*



Jacques Monteaux (holding the guitar) with children, parents, and teachers of the Darbari Waldorf School, which he helped establish as a mentor.

## TOPIC: MENTORING

# The biggest challenge is to build up our own curriculum

Li Zewu was the first teacher in China to commit to Waldorf Education and has been working at the school in Chengdu since 2004. As a mentor, he was involved in founding many more Waldorf Schools in China. For the Newsletter of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*, he shares his personal experiences as a teacher and a mentor.

Being the first Waldorf class teacher in China was a real double-edged sword. On the one hand, I experienced the loneliness of not having other teachers to converse with for many years. Even though, prior to this, I had had 12 years of teaching experience in public schools and had studied abroad, I was still a greenhorn. On the other hand, I was able to experiment with the many new concepts. I could make my mistakes and learn from them as I went along.

I truly appreciate all the support and advice I received in those early years – mostly from overseas partners such as Ben Cherry from Australia and Benno Nijhuis from the Netherlands. I was able to understand, first hand, what was needed for a teacher embarking on such a new journey.

Becoming a mentor, therefore, was a natural transition after several years of my Waldorf life. I started making suggestions and giving advice to the new class teachers at our school. Objectively speaking I didn't consider this to be mentoring, but merely lending a helping hand. I started doing this more frequently as the number of classes grew at our Chengdu school and more schools opened in China. Incidentally, there are currently 16 classes at the Chengdu school (grades one to twelve) and about 70 schools in all of China. It is, therefore, obvious that there is a need for mentoring or more specifically a need for my attention.

I was a class teacher for about 10 years and now I am primarily teaching history in our high school and doing general school management at Chengdu Waldorf. However, I'd like to focus more on class teaching because that is the foundation of helping children and pertinent to the survival of a school.



Li Zewu

I have visited as many schools around China as I was able to – from the very northern part of China, near Korea, to the very southern part, near Hong Kong, and Hong Kong itself. From the very eastern parts close to the Pacific Ocean to the western cities. There are several vast differences between the schools I visited. The class sizes varied, with the smallest class having only two students and the biggest having nearly 30 students. Some classes have mostly boys and some mostly girls. Some classrooms are in very small rooms in residential houses, some in fancy hotel-like rooms. This kind of situation one can understand and relate to, because this education system is still in the early stages. Everything was new – brand spanking new. The parents and teachers are extremely courageous for sending their children to these schools, for them to be taught this new way of education. We refer to this as ESS – Education Self-Surviving. They had many concerns about the competitive education



system in the mainstream schools, which is really full of fear and has just one single aim – Gaokao – the Chinese University Entry Exams.

What I normally do during mentoring at those schools are three main things: to visit a class and give feedback to the teacher whose class I observed; to give some suggestions to the leading teachers there – normally the founders; and to raise some discussions with the entire teaching staff.

1. By visiting the classroom I am able to see the class situation directly, such as the teacher's teaching methods; the connection between the students and the teacher and the relationship between the students. In the earlier stages, the children love their teachers dearly; the teachers worked so hard to manage the class and content; and I would say they devoted themselves to this merit.

There are many teachers still in training. Due to the fact that ESS is urgently needed, they have to put their educational ideas or ideals into action.



Children at the Tiayun Waldorf School in China.

So they are truly striving to achieve this. The content presented by the teachers followed some international curriculum, but also with adaptations, especially in the language and history sections. The biggest challenge is to build up our own curriculum, and that is not easy. There is the “why” and the “how” of integrating Chinese content into a western

curriculum. Then we have to dig deeper – how does consciousness develop in China, and is it similar to the western curriculum? Or, how can Chinese content meet the needs of the children? I do have an advantage over foreign teachers, because I'm a local and deeply understand the culture, I think. It's a challenge to balance the international and the Chinese content. There is either too much international content and not enough Chinese, or vice versa.

As most teachers were inexperienced in the early days of Waldorf China, there were usually two trains of thought. The first was that Waldorf meant freely doing things, creating a happier life at school, festival activities, singing, eurhythmy, no homework, etc., versus the systematic public teaching, which meant overwhelming students with materials, information, homework and more homework. I could see that the teachers I observed were torn between these two systems. My objective was to see what the students really learned during the lessons, and what the teacher ignited in the classroom. To see how thinking, feeling, willing worked through the process and ticked all the points.

There is a strong tradition in this nation called Dujing – Classic Reading. People like Confucius and Laozi wanted to promote classical books and reading from ancient times and thereby strived to save our ancient culture. We need to study these, no doubt, but there was a trend to then ignore child development and the holistic aspect of subjects. Teachers, me included, have been doing research on this, and it is an ongoing process. We have not achieved much yet, but it will come because Anthroposophy provides us with a new tool that is extremely useful in this respect.

Classroom visits are a very direct way to observe the class and the teacher, but there are many different aspects to this and it can be tricky. I usually only see one side, the time is always too short, and therefore I don't see the teaching in its continuity. So I always schedule more talks with the teacher, discuss lessons plans, have general discussions with the teacher and others in the school. It helps. We are teachers and we easily get lonely, especially the new teachers. They need encouragement and assistance

in the beginning of this career, so we need to support each other with warmth. My advantage is again that I speak the same language as the teachers because I understand what they are going through.

2. To connect with founding teachers is also useful. Education depends on people. In my opinion, in China more than that. The social structure is still in a reforming process. Therefore, schools need to be more flexible to fit into society. The founders take on a huge responsibility in the beginning and for quite some time afterwards. They always need to be available, need to overlook the whole situation, and be there to support the teachers in a very direct manner. I could be the medium in between as I have experience in this.

3. I feel it is useful to work with the entire staff of a school. I could assess the vibe of the school and was able to speak frankly about any problems they might have. I try to help them overcome certain issues and to let them see things from another point of view. I also use this time to make an objective observation about the kind of work that they have done. The particular teachers whose classes I visited can use this opportunity to reflect with encouragement.

I have been mentoring in Hong Kong. Hong Kong is the place with the fastest business life and global cultural change, but also struggles with its own identity. There are two Waldorf schools now: one uses English as their mother tongue and the other one uses Cantonese – which I am unable to understand. They both need help in Chinese history and Mandarin. I try my best to provide some teaching methods and materials on these subjects. By communicating and cooperating with each other, we can make great progress in the future.

Throughout my mentoring, I always give some “pills” as suggestions: child development and cultural study, but most importantly study Steiner's educational thoughts and origins. We are very fortunate to have some good translations of some of Steiner's works from German to Chinese, and I am proud to have been involved in some of this work. There is always a light that can inspire us.

It is nice to see the progress that the teachers whom I have helped are making. To see how they are growing, are improving in their teaching and

in their self-development. I have cultivated many friendships through my work at different schools. There is a saying in the Book of Odes, an ancient Chinese classic:

*Cold blows the north wind;  
Thick falls the snow.  
Ye who love and regard me,  
Let us join hands and go together.*

It is quite a challenge to apply Waldorf education in China, as the environment we face appears colder and more distant than somewhere else in the world. But what a great work we are taking on! The student's eyes shine like stars, the destination is settled, and the gleams guide us. Yes, we need to be together and to change or transform whatever obstacles we are confronted with. And, buddy, we will win!

*thanks to Miranda Skelton for English wording  
Li Zewu mit Miranda Skelton  
(aus dem Englischen von Sara Blum)*

## Oases of Love and Peace

For many years, Thanh Cherry has worked as a mentor for Waldorf Kindergartens in Asia. She trains teachers and accompanies kindergartens in the build-up phase – always with the support of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*. For this newsletter, we spoke with her especially about the exceptional situation for kindergartens in Vietnam.



### When did you start working in Vietnam and how did it come about?

I was born in Vietnam, but had been living and working as a Waldorf kindergarten teacher in Australia for a number of years. In 1998, encouraged and supported by a parent from my kindergarten, I founded a charity organization called “The Vietnam Children's Project,” with a view to bring financial and educational assistance to the many

disadvantaged children in Vietnam. I visited the country, made a strong connection with an orphanage run by a group of Buddhist nuns, and agreed to help them establish a kindergarten for the children who lived there. And since I was already committed to Waldorf education, the most natural thing was to start a Waldorf kindergarten. The first one opened in 2000. Today, there are 10 Waldorf kindergartens in Vietnam.

### Are the kindergartens open to all children?

In principle, public kindergartens and schools are open to all children. Kindergarten attendance is even compulsory. But there is a fee to attend these facilities, and the fees are sometimes quite high (depending on the district and the prestige of the place), so poor parents cannot always afford to send their children to kindergarten or school. There are many “street children” who wander the streets during school time.

### Which specific challenges did you encounter in establishing Waldorf kindergartens in Vietnam?

It was especially hard in the first years, because the first two kindergartens we set up were the orphanage kindergarten and a kindergarten for “the poor”. We had very little financial resources; the orphanage kindergarten had no parents to support it, the parents from the other kindergarten were so poor they could barely pay the fees, let alone support the school. The parents on the whole had no understanding of Waldorf education and were not interested in learning more. The educational authorities were antagonistic to the new ideas and opposed the methods and play materials that we used, etc.

### Tell me about the legal situation of kindergartens in Vietnam.

You can run a kindergarten in a private home with up to 36 children in two or three groups. Anything exceeding this size (which can vary from city to city) will need a license. Once you get a license, the kindergarten will get inspected many times a year, according to the whims of the inspecting panel. You will be informed only one hour before the inspector arrives. Once you are licensed, you will have to obey many rules and regulations. Everything has to be “safe” to the point of being restrictive and suffocating for the children – no climbing trees, no playground equipment above a certain height. Plastic grass is preferred over real grass and soil. Woodblocks and wooden toys are considered dangerous because children will hit each other on the head. Stones or rocks are not allowed in the classroom. All toys have to be made of plastic – wood, stone, and metal are considered dangerous, cloth dolls, puppets, and woolen items are considered “dirty”... In one

kindergarten, the inspectors collected all of the woolen and cloth dolls and toys and dumped them into a large basin containing a strong disinfectant solution, where they all fell apart.

Quite a few Waldorf Kindergartens are now established and fully licensed. They flourish, they have many children, many groups, most parents are happy and supportive, the children are thriving and growing healthily as they should. But about once every three months, the office will receive a phone call saying, “The inspectors are coming in an hour.” Then, the whole atmosphere changes. The children are taken outside to play on the playground. Half of the teachers are inside, hastily packing all of the wholesome good toys into boxes, which are then stored in the attic. And out come the bags full of plastic things, dolls with long eyelashes, plastic cars, trains, and ducks. They are scattered all over the classroom floor.

### Why was it so important to you to establish Waldorf Kindergartens in Vietnam, in spite of all the difficulties?

In most families, both parents have to work a lot and are not able to stay home with their young children. At the same time, mainstream education has become very materialistic: Early childhood establishments particularly are essentially jungles of plastic and technology, threatening the children's growth. The few Waldorf kindergartens that exist are like oases of love and peace for the children.

### Children need to be able to read and write when they enter first grade—is that correct?

That is a complex issue. The government recently issued a law that Kindergartens should not teach children to read and write. In reality, first grade teachers at a government school expect children to be able to read and write when they enter first grade. The salary of first grade teachers is so low, they have to supplement their earnings by privately coaching kindergarten children to read and write. They tell the parents that children need to be able to read and write when they enter first grade. So the parents who have no money to pay for the coaching put pressure on the kindergarten teachers to teach their children to read and write in kindergarten.

### How do the Waldorf Kindergarten Teachers deal with this situation?

Different practices have been adopted. In some cases, children go straight from kindergarten to public school without any preparation on the part of the kindergarten teacher. The parents might do something to prepare the child at home during the summer holidays before school starts. Or they may send him/her to a private coach. Some teachers prepare the older children (5 year olds) during the last 3 months they spend at kindergarten, familiarizing them with letters and numbers through games and other artistic means. The third possibility is that, sometime toward the end of the school year, the kindergarten teacher pays a visit to the first grade teacher at the public school that the child has been enrolled in. She explains how Waldorf Education works and informs the other teacher that she herself has not taught the child how to read and write. She asks the other teacher to make allowances for the child without putting any pressure to perform on it for the first two months. Usually, the child will catch up with the other pupils and even excel after that period of time.

### You have been accompanying kindergartens in Vietnam for 17 years. How do you see the development of the children?

For example, there is the boy whose mother managed to keep him in Waldorf kindergarten until he was six years old, against the law. Normally, children are enrolled in public school much earlier. He was sad and frustrated for the first 2 months, then he made a great leap, far exceeding everyone's expectations, and came out at the top of every class. He continued in this way all through primary and high school and has just now joined a prestige university with a scholarship. He is extremely knowledgeable in everything, and kind and upright at the same time. I saw him once every few years; the last time was in 2016. I was very impressed and could still see the effects of what he received during the first 3 years in kindergarten. What is more, he still talked about the wonderful time he had had in kindergarten.

*Interview and editing: Christina Reinthal*



## Little Children Need a Safe Space

From its beginnings, Waldorf education has also been a social driving force, a driving force for the protection of children. Grounded on the right of every child to grow up healthy and sheltered, we want to bring to your attention the situations in several kindergartens. For, as we all know, this right is violated every day. And the only ones who can change this situation – or anything else for that matter – are we ourselves.

Even if it may somehow seem boring that the 350th kindergarten needs a building and that this hardly makes for exciting news, the child's life depends on having a safe space. In many countries, the Waldorf kindergartens, like the Waldorf schools, also receive no financial support from the state and would only be accessible to children of parents with the necessary means, if it weren't for third party support.

In Timișoara, in northwest Romania, the founders of the first Waldorf school received a large building from the municipality in 1999 – today the foundation for the further expansion. The kindergarten, already founded in 1990, moved there and grew and grew. Thankfully, Mrs Christoph accompanied this growth, and through her skill and dedication obtained the necessary financial support for the first kindergarten. Then came the school, which required a lot of hard work from everybody involved. To this day, it is a state school, with all of the advantages and disadvantages that brings. But the schools belong to the supporting association and the state school uses their facilities. A legal and economic setup which doesn't always receive the necessary political support. But both kindergarten and school are fully accepted by the parents. The waiting lists have been growing for three years, and many parents are no longer able to secure a spot in kindergarten or school for their children. For this reason, Mrs Christoph also wanted to obtain funding for the construction of a second kindergarten and was partially successful. After all, she is 93 years old! We are now trying to collect the remaining funds and are very grateful for your support.

The kindergarten in Yerevan, Armenia, was also the first Waldorf institution in its country. This two-track kindergarten owes its existence to Olga Saroyan und Ani Barsegyan. In the last couple of years, however, the two teachers and their assistants have only been able to meet the growing demand, by making the groups extremely large. Today, there are over thirty children in one group. Since they are both very good kindergarten teachers, they are able to provide good care for all of the children. By

now, the parents have also become involved and are trying to help the kindergarten buy a building of its own. However, real estate prices in Yerevan are extremely high, especially when compared with the average income. A very suitable house of 780 square meters and a garden of 1,500 square meters would be available for USD 500.000, requiring an additional USD 250.000 in renovation costs. Now, the average monthly income is around USD 280, which is of course not enough to make ends meet. Non-profit organizations are ineligible for bank loans, which would anyhow involve interest rates around 20 percent. An unsolvable dilemma in a country that is still burdened by corruption. It will not work without help from the outside – a situation that everybody involved finds very unpleasant.

Waldorf schools and Kindergartens are booming in China. Since the foundation of the first Waldorf school there in 2004 in Chengdu, numerous schools have been created throughout the country, especially in the big cities. In 2013, the founders of the Chengdu School decided to make Waldorf education accessible also to children from poorer rural families. When school founder Harry Huang traveled to the province of Guangdong in southern China to be with his dying mother, he became aware of the specific hardships this region faces: Many children here live with their grandparents or with other relatives, while their parents go to the

cities as so-called migrant workers. They cannot afford to live in the city with their entire family, the government does not allow their children to attend school in the city, and so the children stay behind, where their grandparents can often only provide them with insufficient care. They are either old or ill or have to spend many hours per day out on the fields, so that the children are entirely unattended for long periods of time. Harry Huang decided to establish a kindergarten in his former family home; his sister Ai Zhen who had until then worked as a kindergarten teacher in Chengdu gave up her position there and instead started to tend to a group of initially 19 children. Soon, the kindergarten in the family home was overflowing and could legally not continue operating in this manner. With the help of donations, but also by taking private loans, a new kindergarten building for 60 children could be constructed. Here, the children receive healthy food and a safe place in a friendly environment. They do not need to pay any fees; they only pay for the food – for some families even that is not possible. The team is entirely dependent on donations in order to be able to pay the teachers' salaries and to pay back the loans. And, the more children they can offer a safe place, the more teachers are needed.

*Nana Göbel, Christina Reinthal*



Left: The Waldorf Kindergarten in Yerevan, Armenia. Above: The Boluomi Kindergarten in the Chinese province of Guangdong takes care of the children of the impoverished rural population.



The waiting lists for the kindergarten in the Romanian city of Timișoara are long, new rooms are urgently needed



## South Africa, Fish Hoek, Imhoff Waldorf School

**Dear Children and Students,** It is with great delight that we received the news of your very generous gift. You must have worked very hard to gather such a large donation, and we hope you had much joy doing so. We realized very soon how we could best use your gift. We live in the Cape Peninsula which is almost at the tip of Africa, a land surrounded by seas - the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans - and so many children spend a lot of their free time playing in the water.

However, for the children who live in the nearby townships of Masiphumele, Ocean View and Redhill this is not possible, or if they do enter the sea it is dangerous, as they have not had the opportunity to learn to swim. And, when the Classes go on camping trips some of the children are not able to enjoy jumping and diving in the deeper water but can only paddle where it is shallow, and they watch their classmates with much longing. We have organized swimming lessons in the past but were not able to offer as many lessons as were needed for the costs were too high. But now we can – thanks to you.

This year twenty-one children will learn to swim, and still more next year in the new class one.

The children feel wonder for your care and for your work, and of course they are very excited about the swimming lessons.

With much gratitude to you all, on behalf of the swimmers-to-be,

*Belinda Fellion – Class Three Teacher*



## Brasilien, Varzea da Roça, Escola Anael

**Dear WOW-Day Friends,** Thank you very much for your donation, which we used for the renewal of our defective power supply. In our Escola Anael the cable ran underground, as is usual in Europe. But the Brazilian material is not suited for this. When it rained it became particularly dangerous, so we had to lay all the cables above ground. We were able to do this with the help of your donation and thus could prevent potentially fatal accidents from occurring.

Now our power comes onto the school grounds supported by two posts and is distributed to the different rooms aboveground, along the walls or hanging in mid-air.

Many thanks from all of our employees, parents, and students,

*Doris Knipping*



## Together we achieved a lot

“Together for each other! Your commitment enables an education that provides real prospects – worldwide.” This was the motto of WOW-Day 2016. And indeed: Together we achieved a lot! Last fall, colorful fundraisers were held in various places all over the world. Sponsored runs, charity sales, and concerts were again very popular, as was helping your neighbor or working for a business.



More than 160 Waldorf Schools took part in the worldwide day of action. Waldorf Students from 30 countries collected about € 360.000 in donations. The proceeds will benefit more than 60 Waldorf schools and social projects from all around the world. The support provided differs from place to place: Some were able to make a major acquisition; others were able to add a small subsidy to their teacher's salaries. For in many countries, salaries are too low to make ends meet. In many cases, the donations also helped make some very elementary things possible, such as buying fresh produce for a warm meal.

That the commitment of the students really has an effect can be seen at the Lesedi Waldorf School in South Africa. It is about four hours by car from Johannesburg, in the small village of Madietane, a very rural and isolated region. Thanks to the support from WOW-Day, the community could buy a new water tank, as recounted by Kiki Sanne, mentor at the Waldorf School: “You must imagine that during the drought times last year we had to catch every drop of water that we used. Then we used it for the toilets or for the garden. There were days when the water was not enough for everyone to wash every day. Furthermore one of the old tanks was rusted through and therefore spilled some of the precious water.” The new tank can now hold four days worth of water for the school community.

Besides helping with larger investments, the proceeds of the WOW-Day campaigns helped many initiatives to admit children from poorer families. Such as in the Escuela Caracol, the only Waldorf School in Guatemala. The majority of the children

are from Maya families. Most parents have a very low income, so they are not able to pay school fees. With the help of the WOW-Day donations, the Escuela Caracol can now compensate the missing fees and give each child a warm-hearted place to learn and grow.

The proceeds from the student campaigns not only provide important help for many projects to manage their everyday work. The initiatives are also moved by the fact that there are young people all over the world, thinking of them. The commitment of students from different places thus provides encouragement for the institutions to keep on pursuing their oftentimes difficult missions. And that is not all: They are building bridges of friendship across borders, giving hope – for a different, more peaceful world.

*Jana-Nita Raker*

## Take part now!

Some schools have already started their WOW-Day campaigns. We invite all students, teachers, and parents to become part of this worldwide campaign and organize their own WOW-Day already this year. **For more information please visit: [waldorf-one-world.org](http://waldorf-one-world.org)**



## Life as a Refugee

In 2012, the *Friends of Waldorf Education* sent the first Emergency Pedagogy team to Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. Several further interventions followed, from which a local initiative emerged two years later, the Waldorf Kakuma Project. Here, under the simplest conditions and under the open sky, the children receive support in processing their experiences.

Only 100 kilometers from the border of South Sudan are the refugee camps Kakuma and Kalobeyei. People coming from the poorest countries of the world live here, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, and Ethiopia. They flee from civil wars, violence, persecution, hunger, and poverty. Political and social dynamics contribute to the causes of flight, as well as ecological or economic conditions. Today, over half a million people live in Kenyan refugee camps and an end of this flow of refugees is not in sight.

Both, people with and without a refugee background work together at the Waldorf Kakuma Project. Their personal histories offer an insight into the richness of African biographies. They always tell a part of Africa's history and its reality, even if they do not, of course, characterize the entire continent. Major influences in Africa have been the decades-long colonial rule by European countries, the proxy wars between the global powers, or the systematic exploitation of natural resources by international actors. Often, independence was followed by dictatorship and long-term autocratic rule, along with ethnic polarization and the marginalization of individual population groups. People are discriminated against, persecuted, and displaced. Social fabric is torn apart and resentment reinforced. There are human rights violations: Looting, attacks, and especially sexualized violence against women. When the staff members of the Waldorf Kakuma Project tell the stories of their lives, they not only talk about the trauma in their life, but also



acknowledge it as part of their own biographies – another step in processing the suffering.

### Heshima from Congo

The Democratic Republic of Congo is an example of how colonial rule, dictatorship, and civil wars prevent the constitution of a functioning state. Independence was followed by a 30-year dictatorship and armed conflicts. Today, large parts of eastern Congo are still controlled by informal militias and rebel groups. Already as a child, Heshima witnessed the systematic discrimination experienced by her father, who had moved his family from Ruanda to the Democratic Republic of the Congo long before. Ultimately, Heshima's mother was abducted and abused for several days. The family home was burned down, the father was killed, and all belongings were destroyed. Without a man in their household, Heshima and her mother were vulnerable to all kinds of discrimination and violence. They fled through Uganda to Kenya and finally arrived at Kakuma refugee camp. The other people and the food at the reception center were alien to Heshima, and she began to isolate herself.

Finally, after several months, she and her mother were allocated an accommodation in the camp. In 2012, she began working for Waldorf Kakuma, receiving a basic training in emergency pedagogy and sitting in on an already existing group that worked with traumatized infants on a daily basis. But at first the methods seemed strange to Heshima, and her unprocessed experiences discomfited her: the loss of her father and her home, the recruitment of her cousin as a child soldier, the death of her brother. For a long time, she was contemplating revenge and considered the world to be an evil place.

It was only when an experienced staff member came up to her that she learned to speak about her experiences, accepting the trauma as a part of her life in spite of all hardship. She began to write down her thoughts and feelings in a book. Gradually, she opened up, found more and more joy in her work, and strengthened her self-confidence in her new role. "I got into the flow", she said, adding: "Now I am who I really am." Ultimately, she got in touch with her individual skills and interests, thereby finding a way to take charge of her life.

### Samuel from Burundi

Samuel, whose parents originally came from the East African country of Burundi, has been a refugee since his birth: He was born in a refugee camp in Tanzania. In the 1990s, thousands of Burundians fell victim to the bloody conflicts between the



population groups of Tutsi and Hutu.

Samuel's family fled to the neighboring country of Tanzania. There, his mother experienced systematic violence and abuse and was ultimately taken to Ruanda with her children, where Samuel and his brother had no prospects for their future. When in 2015 Samuel set off by himself for his parent's country of origin, he found himself in the middle of a civil war. Members of the opposition and members of the Tutsi minority, to which Samuel belongs, were systematically discriminated against, persecuted and killed. He could not prove that he is from Burundi. For the third time in his life he had to take to the road and flee, forcibly leaving the country he had hoped to take roots in. On the run, he was captured by rebels but managed to escape again. A large scar in his face is evidence of the violence he experienced.

Back in Ruanda he again suffered discrimination as stateless person and was eventually forced to continue on to Kenya.

Samuel never experienced a childhood of freedom, even during his adolescence he was constantly fleeing. Everywhere, he has lived as a foreigner. Just as in the refugee camp of Kakuma. But he has a meaningful mission, as he says: in the daily work with Waldorf Kakuma, he enables traumatized children to experience joy and offers them psychosocial support. For the first time in his life, he has a mission upon which he can build his self-confidence.

*Reta Lüscher-Rieger*

## Aguyevete Kiringue! – Welcome, Children!

For a year now, Elisabeth Rybak and Paula Kiefer have been building a kindergarten in Misiones in the Argentinian rain forest as part of their voluntary service. In their report they tell us of this special task.



„Opa maestra! Opa!“ „Opa“ means „Stop, Quit, Over!“ in the language of the indigenous Mbya-Guarani people. Three-year-old Ariel has had enough. He has several pus-filled eczemas on his head. The treatment is very painful, but he endures and does not run away. He is only complaining that I have to wash his head and administer a cream to his scalp three times a day. Ariel lives in the Mbya comunidad Namandu in the rain forest and attends our newly founded Waldorf Kindergarten. Together with the other small children, he used to sit by the window, or annoyed the schoolchildren in class. Now we, that is Paula Kiefer and Elisabeth Rybak, former students from Lübeck and volunteers of the *Friends of Waldorf Education* are trying to live a structured morning with the children.

The comunidad is one of the last entirely isolated ones, situated in the middle of the jungle. The people have been able to preserve much of their culture. They still live in their traditional huts, even though new ones have been built for them. For survival, they hunt armadillos and practice slash-and-burn agriculture. The culture of the Mbya is much less determined than ours. They have a hard time making decisions. They basically always need to sleep on it. When they explain something, they

don't frame it logically, but provide a lot of partial information. As opposed to us Europeans, they never stare into empty space or focus their gaze on just one thing in full concentration. They simply always see everything at once.

In this little village, without electricity or running water, a school was established in 2014. And even if this leads to a European influence, it is necessary for the children to learn how to read and write in order for them to be able to defend their right to their land. And the principal is very interested in including more elements of Waldorf Education in the classes. It harmonizes well with the Mbya traditions, and helps us reconcile the given cultural preconditions with the demands of the Argentinian school system.

Two teachers work at the school. One for the first two grades and one for the older children. We teach music or art to each grade one afternoon per week. We are also supposed to teach sports. But the children run around all day anyway and usually play soccer or volleyball all by themselves in the sweltering heat of the afternoons. So we, despite not having been particularly enthusiastic Eurythmy students ourselves, decided to do Eurythmy with the children. This can be done in a formed circle,

everything can simply be mimicked, and we don't have the problem of not being able to explain the rules. It has made us very happy to see with how much excitement the children imitate the words of their mother tongue.

But apart from all the work, we also need to finish our kindergarten room. So we decided to stay in the comunidad over night and moved into the future kindergarten room, where garbage and donated clothes were being stored. That way, we had time after 4 pm to sort the donations and design the room. We built shelves with the students, so we could store everything there and partition off a small area for us, where we have made ourselves comfortable. We shower outside with a mug, at night when the moon isn't shining.

To build the shelf, we had to cut up a lot of rough old lumber. But sawing turned out to be a recess favorite. Especially one 15-year-old, who is basically unteachable because he is constantly fidgeting and also gets aggressive very easily, became our king of sawing.

Now that we live in the comunidad, we also learn more about their culture and the music, which is still very much alive in Namandu. Every morning and every evening, the village musician plays and

sings to greet and say goodbye to the sun. His name is Little Lightning and he enjoys telling the children and us how the world is ordered in the view of the Mbya.

We extended our voluntary service through the *Friends of Waldorf Education* to two years. We want to try and understand as much as possible about the Mbya culture in order to integrate our kindergarten into it. Our dream is to one day be able to pay one of the Mbya, who would then take over the kindergarten. While we are by now able to sing and communicate with them in Mbya, Spanish, and German, an Mbya would of course be much better suited to celebrate their culture together with the children.

Since we do not have any training as kindergarten teachers, beside our own Waldorf childhood, we read the lectures on pedagogy to each other in the evenings, regularly visit a Waldorf Kindergarten in Posadas, and have also already taken part in the Argentinian Waldorf early childhood training. We were especially lucky to have a Swiss kindergarten teacher come to our village. Thanks to her initiative, we now receive delicious bananas from the neighboring comunidad. With these bananas and with the help of donations, we now want to ensure that the children receive a healthy meal at least for their afternoon snack. Otherwise, they mainly eat sugar, wheat, and fat. That weakens the immune system, which is especially dangerous in the harsh conditions of jungle life, where we have to deal with many parasites such as sand fleas and worms that live under the skin – and even more so for Ariel and the other kindergarten children, who are still occupied with building their bodies. Thankfully, they have already developed a lot of trust in us, making our work so fantastic. We are grateful to everybody that we get to spend these two exciting years in the jungle and are already anxiously anticipating the moment when our time here will actually be „opa“.



## Learning as participation in communities

For many years, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has been supporting projects of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*, mainly by financing the construction side of the projects. Martyn Rawson evaluated three curative education facilities for the BMZ. This grew into an extensive report, which has now been published as a book.



For his evaluation, Martyn Rawson also visited the curative education facility, Tinh Truc Gia in Vietnam

In many countries, the financial support by the BMZ has enabled the creation of projects, which would probably have never made it with their own resources alone. This kind of support is extremely important and belongs to the most effective forms of developmental aid by foreign governments, because it helps make the ideas, the ideals, and the hopes of people reality.

The aim of my evaluation was to investigate how the respective concepts of curative education work in practice and how the facilities are maintaining, supporting, and developing the quality of life of the people in their care.

In May 2016, I was assigned the task of scientifically evaluating three curative education facilities: the social village Manas in Kyrgyzstan, First Step Together in Beirut, Lebanon and Tinh Truc Gia (‘peaceful bamboo family’) in Hue in Vietnam. All three facilities have in common a curative education approach based on Rudolf Steiner’s art of education. In a way, my task thus

consisted in making visible and scientifically explaining the efficacy of Waldorf Education in its curative educational manifestation. Nowadays, all educational facilities are encouraged to work inclusively, without there being an established best practice for this so far. For me, the most interesting part of it was to see how to integrate people with disabilities in totally different cultures and in different lifestyles. If we understand better how the integration of people with disabilities can succeed in curative education facilities, we can learn from this also for other facilities, such as Waldorf schools, cooperatives, and businesses

My study relied on two theoretical perspectives for investigating integration: the perceived coherence and the participation in a practicing community. To evaluate the coherence, one needs to find out to what extent the people feel that they understand what they are doing, that their tasks are manageable, and that it makes sense for them to take part in them. The second perspective required reconstructing the quality of, and the opportunities and conditions for, participation in the day-to-day practices by people with disabilities. In all three facilities it became clear that these criteria are fulfilled as far as possible. This is hardly a matter of course. I believe that this understanding and this perspective on teaching can give us a lot, also at Waldorf schools and in other facilities. It can help us better understand both the process of integration and learning itself.

If you want to read the entire report, you will find a link on the website of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*.

Martyn Rawson

### New Schools in Athens and Kiev

After more than two years of intense preparations, the moment has finally arrived: Greece gets its first Waldorf school. The curative education facility Estia Agios Nikolaos near Delphi has been active since the 1990s, and in Athens four successful Waldorf Kindergartens were established in the course of the past decade. Two years ago, the parents of some of the kindergarten children started an initiative to found a Waldorf School. Archontis Karanasios, a former Waldorf student in Pforzheim and now an architect and art teacher, led the initiative together with the teacher Sandra Mavroidis and Alexandros Kendalepas. Through their untiring work, this project has now come to fruition: A building was renovated and the permission, a real hurdle in Greece, arrived on August 28. The festive inauguration took place on September 2.

There is also a new Waldorf School in Ukraine. In the last few years, the Sophia School in Kiev was only able to accept less than half of the registered children. Waldorf education has been gaining increasing acceptance in the country in the years since the Maydan uprising, and the number of registrations has dramatically increased. Some teachers could no longer bear this situation and joined forces with the parents of the students that were not accepted to found a second school in Kiev. After the summer holidays, teaching of the first grade of the new school will begin in the unused rooms of a boarding school. Further grades will follow.

### Hebet el-Nil in Luxor Becomes a Community School



Even though school attendance is compulsory in Egypt, only one third of children actually go to school. Those that do are taught in groups with an average size of 70 and learn by shouting in unison. Children who lag behind run the risk of being beaten. When the speech formation teacher and actress Nathalie Kux was in Luxor in 2015 on a cultural journey, she met a restaurant owner, who wanted something better for the children of his neighborhood, and she decided to do something about it. She built up a Kindergarten with the long-term goal of later also founding a school there. A kindergarten teacher and a schoolteacher from Switzerland came to Luxor and held seminars on Waldorf education for the local teachers. In Summer 2016, the kindergarten opened with 60 children. Now, the association has obtained the permission for a community school for grades one through six. The first grade started in September with 24 children; next year, new rooms will be built on a larger property, initially for the first three grades.

### New School Building for Haiti

In October 2016, a major hurricane partly destroyed the Waldorf School École du Village in Haiti. *Friends of Waldorf Education* reacted immediately by sending out an urgent email call for financial support. In this manner, an initial sum was quickly transferred so that classes were reassumed quickly. But this calamity and also the major hurricanes late last summer, which barely missed the school,



showed how important a solid school building is. Now they have started building such a dwelling – the foundations are already completed. The *Friends of Waldorf Education* support the construction in the Central American country, which belongs to the poorest in the western hemisphere.

### Social therapy in Russia



Since 2005, the social therapeutic facility “Blagoe Delo”, situated in a village 70 kilometers north of Yekaterinburg, supports handicapped people. In the workshops, they manufacture wooden angels or felt shoes, or they rehearse for theater plays, which they have already presented abroad and for which they have even won prizes. In the last year, the financial situation became so precarious that some employees, several of whom are themselves handicapped, had to be laid off. Some of the employees have not received any pay since January. The *Friends of Waldorf Education* supported the facility with € 10.000, enabling the work to continue.

### New Premises for the Waldorf School El Til-ler in Spain

In 1999, the Waldorf school El Til-ler was founded in Bellaterra near Barcelona – and the school wants to expand. But it has long since reached the limits of its current location. In late April, the school community successfully purchased some premises close by. In January 2016, the school obtained authorization to run a High School and thus can

also teach students from 7th grade upwards. Such an authorization is only granted when there are enough rooms for all grades and this is why the school community chose mobile buildings, which they can now take along to the new school premises. The mobile buildings were set up with the support of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*. Each year, more students apply than can be registered – now the school can meet at least a part of the demand.



### Always receive our up-to-date information

If you subscribe to our e-newsletter you will get these news in brief faster. Once a month, the *Friends of Waldorf Education* inform about current events in the worldwide Waldorf movement. You can subscribe to the e-newsletter by going to [freunde-waldorf.de](http://freunde-waldorf.de). You will find the link at the bottom of our home page.



## EDUCATIONAL SPONSORSHIPS

### Dear educational sponsor, dear class,

*In most countries, Waldorf schools receive no state support and parents are often unable to come up with the school fees. With an educational sponsorship, you can enable children from underprivileged families to attend a Waldorf school. In this manner, you also help the school to accept students from diverse social backgrounds and thus support the entire school organism. You can freely choose the size of your donation, since any amount can help. The entire school fee usually lies between 35 and 200 € per month. As educational sponsor, you will receive a photograph and a letter or a short report from your sponsored child twice a year.*

*We would be happy if you chose to become an educational sponsor! Simply fill out the form “Donate and Help” (p. 47) and indicate the name of the child and the school. As every sponsorship is highly individual, and every educational sponsor has different visions and ideas, I would invite you to a short initial personal meeting.*

Fabian Michel

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### HUNGARY



#### Waldorf School Gödöllő Bonifac (8)

Bonifac lives in Veresegyhaz, near Gödöllő, with his parents and his two brothers. He enjoys learning how to read, write, add, and subtract in school and then at home he enjoys demonstrating what he learned at school. He also enjoys reciting verses and is teaching his mother how to weave.

### PORTUGAL



#### Escola Livre do Algarve in Lagos

Nagual (7) lives in Raposeira, in Southwest Portugal, with her mother and her younger brother. Her father lives in Spain and visits the family twice a month. Nagual is a very kind and friendly girl. At school, she particularly enjoys reading and writing, as well as music class. Also in her spare time, Nagual most enjoys reading books.

### POLAND



#### Janusz Korczak Waldorf School, Krakow

Maja (9) is friendly, open-minded, and adventurous. At School, she always very much looks forward to clay modeling, but her favorite subject is German (as a foreign language). In her spare time, Maja does a lot of sports, goes swimming or hiking in nature.

### MOLDOVA



#### Liceul Teoretic Waldorf in Kishinev

Ilinca (14) is an active and convivial girl. She has great artistic talent and takes part in all of her class's concerts and plays. In class, she needs more time to copy texts and assignments from the black board, because she suffers from cataracts. Her classmates are very considerate and help her, where they can. For many years, her mother has been a dedicated teacher at this school, where she teaches Romanian.



## RUSSIA



### St. George School in Moscow

**Masha (14)** is the born teacher. She has all the necessary qualities, being kind, diligent, hardworking, and always ready to help. With her enthusiasm, Masha shows the other students that learning is not boring.

## SOUTH AFRICA



### Hermanus Waldorf School

**Yonga (8)** lives in Kwasa-Kwasa, with his parents, siblings, and grandmother. His mother works as a housekeeper, providing the primary income for the family. Yonga loves math. In his spare

time, he rides the bike that he got from his mother's employer.



### Work for Love School

**S bongile (7)** is a smart and happy girl. As a result of a cerebral palsy she can only move her right hand with difficulty. But that doesn't keep her from learning and playing. Even needlework is not a problem. When it gets harder for her, she finds a creative way to master the task. This makes her a role model for both her classmates and her teachers.



### Zenzeleni Waldorf School, Cape Town

**Busani (7)** lives in a township near the school with his mother, his sister, and his uncle. He greatly enjoys learning and is fast and diligent in completing his assignments. He enjoys singing and playing during recess. When Busani grows up, he wants to be a Karate instructor.

## TANZANIA



### Hekima Waldorf School, Dar es Salaam

**Elikana (7)** is an only child. When his father died and his mother had to move back to her village, his uncle took custody – he is the school's bus driver. Elikana has difficulties walking and needs regular treatment. Still, he is a happy child and laughs and jokes a lot.

## MEXICO



### Escuela de la Ciudad de México

**Aline (11)** lives in simple circumstances with her younger sister and her parents. Aline is a quiet girl. She is very alert. Most of all, she enjoys music class.

## PHILIPPINES



### Gamot Cogon School

**William (7)** has two younger brothers, who attend the school's kindergarten. William is a confident boy, very attentive in class, and is always open towards new students. He enjoys playing outside with his classmates. His favorite subject is drawing and painting.

Read more about this campaign at  
[www.freunde-waldorf.de/en](http://www.freunde-waldorf.de/en)

## CLASS SPONSORSHIPS



## The second grade of Mbagathi Waldorf School in Nairobi

"This is a wonderful class", says class teacher Ms. Janet about her students. The girls and boys mainly come from difficult financial backgrounds and live in Ongata Rongai and the surroundings. Ongata Rongai is a Massai name and denotes a narrow plain close to Nairobi. At the beginning of the school day all children are provided with breakfast, and they also receive a healthy meal for lunch. The school includes a small farm and a little vegetable garden, providing the students with many healthy ingredients for the meals. The children themselves are very caring and get along well. An important part of the lessons is the daily singing and dancing, in which all children take part with great enthusiasm. The class teacher puts a lot of emphasis on teaching the children respect towards nature. She achieves this by organizing playful fieldtrips into nature with the children.

Nairobi is a progressive city. However, large parts of the population are fighting for survival. Finding

work is difficult, and often people are struggling to pay for food, rent, and clothing. The children of Mbagathi School often come from difficult family situations. It is not uncommon to have children whose parents are separated, deceased, or suffer from AIDS.

The Mbagathi Waldorf School has been constantly growing since its inauguration in 1992. Today, the school takes care of 300 girls and boys, of whom 90 are living in the school's boarding home. The teaching staff consists mainly of Kenyan teachers, but international colleagues support their work now and again.

The school has to deal with an increasing number of applications from parents who are basically not able to afford the tuition fees. Educational sponsorships are an important help for the school since 95% of the parents can only afford to pay very little in tuition, if anything at all.

## Join the 10 % campaign

The Friends of Waldorf Education forward the donations at 100%, financing the work of the association mainly through memberships and single donations, as well as through interest earnings. And this is becoming increasingly difficult. In order for us to maintain our work in the future, forwarding donations, accompanying kindergartens, schools and curative education facilities, we would be very grateful if you joined our 10% campaign. Increase your project or sponsorship donation by 10% to support the work of the Friends.



# Donate and Help

Yes! I would like to donate \_\_\_\_\_ €  once  monthly  
My donation is for:  six-monthly  on an annual basis.

- the International Relief Fund
- the following project/godchild: \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes, I would like to participate in the 10% campaign and donate an additional 10% of the amount mentioned above towards the budget of the *Friends*.
  
- My donation is for the work of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*.
- With my donation I become a sustaining member of the *Friends of Waldorf Education*.

\_\_\_\_\_  
First Name, Name

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Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone, Fax number

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Email

Yes, I would like to receive the newsletter "keep up with the *friends*" (for which my email address is required)

## The 10% campaign

- Yes, I would like to participate in the 10% campaign and donate an additional 10% towards the budget of the *Friends*. Enabling the development of Waldorf initiatives worldwide is important to me.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date, Signature

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## > How can I help?

With non-dedicated donations for our International Relief Fund, the *Friends of Waldorf Education* can respond to urgent requests and support initiatives worldwide. As a sponsor you can give children the opportunity to attend a Waldorf school. And through their commitment on WOW-Day, students can raise money for disadvantaged children in Waldorf initiatives worldwide.

## > Does my donation reach its intended purpose?

Sponsorship donations, contributions for the International Relief Fund and donations without specified purpose, as well as the money collected on WOW-Day, are all forwarded to the intended projects directly at 100%, i.e. without deduction of administrative costs. We are also in close contact with our partners, who inform us regularly about their work.

## > How do I contribute as a supporter?

As a supporter, you can contribute to ensure that donations are forwarded at 100% to Waldorf initiatives around the globe, that our partner projects receive support in difficult situations, as well as ensure that our global commitment will be published through our publications. As a sustaining member, you will receive our member newsletters that inform you about new developments in our work. We appreciate every donation that helps us realise our important work!

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