

RUNDBRIEF

SPRING 2016

Freunde der
Erziehungskunst
Rudolf Steiners



WALDORF EDUCATION IN MEXICO

KYRGYSTAN Flying Start For Bishkek

SPAIN An Upper-School for El Til.ler

KENYA The Mbagathi Steiner School

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*

Titel Photo: Students at
the „Escuela Waldorf
de la Ciudad de Mexico“
doing folk dance

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Dear Readers,

special circumstances enable the *Friends of Waldorf Education* to manage an Israel Fund, through which they can support Israeli Waldorf schools with interest – free loans. This support project was the reason why we visited various Waldorf schools in Israel at the end of last year.

The people I encountered there left me deeply moved by the many faceted stories of their lives, paths which crossed at each of the schools we visited, and with the seriousness with which the teachers carried out their work. It was particularly cheering to hear a mother describing her first visit to a school many years ago, which left her feeling so touched by the shared lives together that she immediately wished to become part of this community. She then pondered as to how she could achieve this, as she was already too old to be a student at the school.

This made me laugh. When I think back at my wonderful time at school, I remember asking myself from time to time how it would be to be part of such a community as a grown-up for one further year. At the same time, it was clear to me that this would be impossible, a conclusion that has been proven through time, as now I certainly am no longer a child.

The mother, however, at the school we visited, wasn't content with this conclusion. If not as a student, then as a teacher, she said to herself, and courageously decided to learn the teaching craft necessary to make a contribution to this place – which is what she then did and is doing until this day.



I'm convinced that alongside our questions as to what makes us and our children fully human, it is a drive of a sort this mother has, which motivates people throughout the world to found a Waldorf school. That's why it is a joy and privilege for me to be able to report to you in this spring issue about initiatives, which have been created out of just such courage and hard work.

Jaspar Röh

The Work of the Friends of Waldorf Education

"When the first Waldorf School was founded, I said – beautiful, the Waldorf School is beautiful; but merely founding the first Waldorf School is not enough in this field. At the most, it represents the very first beginning, or even the beginning of a beginning. We will only really have founded the Waldorf School, if by the end of the next quarter we will have laid the foundations for ten further new Waldorf schools. Only then will the Waldorf School mean something. With regard to Europe's current social situation, it simply doesn't make sense to found one single Waldorf school with four or five hundred children, or even a thousand children if you will. The only thing which makes sense or which is meaningful is when the founding of Waldorf schools is emulated, when this is emulated everywhere – that's the only meaning which can spring from the right, practical attitude. If those people who are gushing for the Waldorf school's ideas haven't yet understood that producing propaganda against the school's dependence on the state is part of the same process, as is engaging with all their energies for the state to release this school from the grip; if those people haven't accessed the courage needed to strive for the separation of the school from the state, then the whole Waldorf school movement's nothing more than a dog's breakfast. This movement can only mean something if it grows up into a free, spiritual life." *Rudolf Steiner during a question-and-answer evening on October 12, 1920, which was part of the first anthroposophical higher education course. (Translated from the German Complete Works Edition 337 b.)*

Just three more years before the Waldorf school movement commemorates 100 years of its existence. While looking back proudly at the strong growth of the last thirty years, and delighting in the fact that the Waldorf school movement is now known in half of the countries on earth, we might also be very worried due to the severe shortage of teachers – both female and male – who want to become Waldorf educationalists. Another major cause for concern could be the fact that



Chair of the board: Nana Göbel

many upper schools have orientated themselves on state upper school models, particularly on the German *gymnasia*. Finally, we might also well be troubled about the challenge of a social form of comprehensive education model.

Many such considerations spring immediately to mind and there are good arguments for thinking about each of them. For me, it's a recurring source of happiness that nothing is more certain than change is. The altered conditions of European society are causing very many things to move. Yet at the same time, my hopes that the rigid structures of our lives will give way, in the face of the flexibility we now need, are dwindling. The same applies for the education system.

The Waldorf school movement, as it turned out, was not a dog's breakfast. Its educational impact, and its impact in terms of education politics, unfolded and developed. But it did not set the conflagration alight for a 'education towards freedom, which would still be necessary, with regards the achievement-orientated values which determine the school system today, after the reports from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and other educational attainment studies. Once educational robots have been deployed across the board, we can assume that the relationships between students and



teachers, between children and parents, and even the health of individuals – all aspects covered in the last two newsletters – will no longer be in the focus of things.

These machines will change the education system of the 21st century entirely. To look after what is human in all of this – and to enable it to survive – we will need educational oases, very many of them. Waldorf kindergartens and schools will only have a large impact when a sufficient number of them exist. It is possible that some of these oases are too small to care for the human in us and for the practice of human dignity. It is against this backdrop that we can look back with a lot of gratitude at everything we have achieved so far, and simultaneously still find the courage to swim against the stream, to educate in an ever more honest way, and, finally, to concentrate on bringing up children and young adults – in a climate dominated instead by examining these individuals.

All Friends of Waldorf Education have contributed to the spread of the education system Steiner called the 'art of bringing up children'. Not only through

the founding of new institutions performed with missionary fervour globally, but through the friendly and sympathetic support and promotion of local initiatives – and, importantly, networking these initiatives with each other. In order that solid, quality work can be carried out in all these kindergartens and schools reliable cooperation with many partners is needed, particularly with the Goetheanum's Pedagogical Section and with the various teacher-training institutes.

If we manage to secure this cooperation, then the Waldorf school movement can continue to grow into its second century, working together with other willing individuals to lead the urgently necessary battle charge for the eradication of machines out of the education of humans. And whether there's any academic recognition for doing this or not, is neither here nor there.

Waldorf in the Levant

We visited Waldorf schools in Israel a couple of months ago, including the practically orientated Oded School in Yodfat the north of the country.

This is within range of rockets fired from Lebanon, where an aggressive mood against Jewish localities is growing. Conversations with the teachers took place in an atmosphere of pensiveness. And at the same time, you can experience a strong joy in the work with the students in all the projects – keeping bees, tending the garden, building school furniture and preparing for artistic performances.

The Education Ministry granted the school a special budget for all these practical projects, which also stretches to finance evaluations to accompany these activities. The aim is to demonstrate how rural Waldorf schools can offer specialized training in those activities which arise in such an environment. During the visit, we were all able to experience, how honest human encounters – an upstanding movement, in an inward sense – have been able to develop immediately, where people have triumphed over adversity. What we can call an educational oasis.

We also experienced an educational oasis in the only real metropolis in Israel, in Tel Aviv. On the city boundary between Tel Aviv and Jaffa, where a young soldier was stabbed shortly before our visit in October, you can find an only building, which was constructed as the headquarters for Israeli Telecom in the 1960s. This building was due to be torn down and upmarket apartments were planned to take its place.

Until that happens, the new owner of the building has let the Aviv Waldorf School use the building for an affordable rent. The mostly young parents are highly successful in the arts of business and of life, are unusually motivated and have been steeled in the Israeli fight for survival. They enjoy life a lot and rebuilt the building in this spirit together – 200 parents – during three summer months, in what you could call an efficient festival of work. They have created a beautiful and aesthetically attractive school, a cultural oasis indeed, in the middle of the loud traffic noise of the city.

Here school has become a shared cultural space for children and parents, teachers and friends. The Friends of Waldorf Education has been able to help in the form of relatively high loans.

Interest in Waldorf education is also growing in North Africa and in Western Asia. Individual people



Left: Student painting at FISTA in Lebanon. Right: View of valley housing the Yodfat Waldorf School, Israel; Main Lesson in Caracol, Guatemala; Class 2 in the Tel Aviv Waldorf School, Israel



Staff Member of Friends of Waldorf Education in conversation with the College of Teachers at Yodfat School, Israel



Budapest Eurythmy School

are asking questions about this education system, people, for example, who grew up in Germany but are now living in Mexico, but also people whose families come from these regions, and who wish to engage for a more globally open and freer future.

For now we can only see the first shoots, like the first green among a bunch of snowdrops, that peeks out of the ground, but which will need a long while yet before it grows. In the case of snowdrops or daffodils we can be sure that they will grow and flower with all necessity. That's where our trust in nature comes from. But with these institutional shoots, we cannot necessarily be sure that any kindergartens or any schools actually result. It depends on individual people and on the political and societal conditions they are working in.

And these conditions in this part of the world are more likely to make you despair at present. This is why we admire the stamina of the teachers at the curative education Fista School in Beirut, or of the Hamburg journalist who has set up a Waldorf kindergarten in Satilla, a Palestinian district of the same city. The Friends of Waldorf Education have been financing the curative education teacher training in Lebanon for years now and will also be helping with this more recent kindergarten.

Appeal for Funds: Teacher Training

Very many Friends of Waldorf Education took part in our autumn 2015 appeal for funds. This was a great delight, enabling us to build up our Scholarship Fund, with which we can back future

teachers. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you once again most heartily for the donations that we received for this purpose. In the coming newsletters, we will regularly portray students, whose study course in Waldorf education we finance. Part of every Waldorf school is of course the eurythmy teaching. An increasing significance is attached to these lessons.

As the total amount of time children spend playing and moving outside decreases, and as the amount of time spent in front of screens increases, the significance attached to movement lessons grows steadily. That's why we've supported a few eurythmists who were certain that they wanted to work at a Waldorf school after qualifying from their study course. Eurythmy teaching is a particularly popular subject in the Hungarian Waldorf movement, a movement that continues to grow. With our support coupled with the support of other foundations, we were able to uphold the existing Eurythmy Training in Budapest. And nevertheless, every new year brings with it an unforeseeable challenge in being able to maintain the current scope of the training. In countries, in which there is on full-time training to become a Waldorf teacher, the training normally takes place in learning blocks. This is a good start, but nothing more than that. This is also why the training has to be continued by mentors who come into the classroom and help teachers with their everyday problems, support them with the task of lesson preparation, and carry out loving – but also critical – lesson evaluations

with them. Making mistakes is normally the quickest way to learn. The roles carried out by these mentors are as indispensable in China, as they are in India, Malaysia, Poland or Rumania. That's why we've been communicating for years between schools and possible mentors, and put in requests to many experienced teachers from Germany, Switzerland, England or the USA to accompany a class in the role of a mentor. Alongside the financial support we offer, the quantity of these 'networking tasks' is strongly on the increase.

Volunteer Service Programs

Overall, we're happy to report a small plus in the total numbers taking part in these programs, after considering the moderate changes in the legal framework that have affected these volunteer service programs – for the current cohort of volunteers. Against the backdrop of a small decrease in demand due to demographic developments, and the changes caused by either eight years or nine years of gymnasium school in the different German federal states, this is, all in all, a very welcome development. At the start of January 2016, the annual educational conference for incoming volunteer programs, outgoing volunteer programs, and the so-called 'Incoming' category, took place in the attractive conference centre 'Der Hof', in Niederursel, Germany. This year's conference dealt with the places of volunteer deployment as the central location for volunteer services. It provided all present with a fruitful chance to grapple with the question what is needed for a period of volunteer service to be successful. This was seen in the context of a biographical experience in relation with the location where the volunteer is deployed.

The Volunteer Program Abroad Team has been working intensively in the last few months, on how the process of supporting both our volunteers and their places of deployment can be more successfully coordinated from a single point.

Emergency Education

Above everything, it was the massive flight of refugees last year to Europe that laid new challenges in front of our emergency education program. For

the first time, we carried out operations along the principal refugee routes in Greece and Slovenia. The work with refugees in Germany is also being developed. Alongside the existing classes in the Parzival School Centre in Karlsruhe, we are offering play activities for children in initial reception centres in various federal states and also in other forms of refugee accommodation.

After the tragic events in Paris, an emergency education team travelled to a short operation in the city, where we provided support for our volunteers who were already stationed there.

In the Philippines, we visited our children centres again in November. These have been running since Typhoon Haiyan in November 2013, and offer children a protected environment suited to their needs. It is a joy to watch how well our work has developed there.

It has also proven possible to continue the work we began three years ago in northern Iraq in cooperation with UNICEF. The focus of our autumn operations was primarily on strengthening these projects capacity for self-sufficiency and on further training for the local teams – a pressing issue. It unfortunately remains uncertain whether or not the cooperation with UNICEF and the support we offer can continue as before.

We are dependent on our members' contributions to be able to achieve all these goals. Moreover, we would be delighted, if many more people still were to support our work through a sponsoring membership. Considering the current state of the financial markets, we are increasingly dependent on the readiness to help of our current – and also, hopefully, future – members. We will only be able to raise the number of Waldorf schools performing solid work, qualitatively speaking, if we stick together. So that these schools can become the cultural factor, the cultural oases, that they were always intended to be. That's when they can contribute to a positive transformation of societies.

Nana Goebel

The Significance of Listening Attentively

When you talk, you are only repeating what you already know. But if you listen, you may learn something new. – *Dalai Lama*

I've been reading this saying occasionally for years, but I never really knew what it meant or how you can apply it.

It was especially the teachers' conferences which made me think again and again about it, a place where teachers should be able to contribute ideas about lesson development, festivals, parents' evenings, assemblies and so on. Is it really possible to cultivate an 'I'-You' relationship at these meetings, as described by Torin Finser in his book 'School Renewal'. This is something I've thought about for long now.

But it was only in the last two modules of the Advanced Level East Africa Waldorf Teacher Development Program when a light flicked on in my mind to cast light on this question. In the Foundation Level East Africa Waldorf Teacher Training, most teachers were concerned about grasping the core contents of Waldorf education. We had just come into contact with this new and 'miraculous' way of bringing up children. This kind of education really was a miracle for me, as I had never before seen such happy children and such an appreciative way for people to deal with each other. To my astonishment, the students even managed to accumulate more knowledge as other students pushed on by use of punishment.

As we started to grasp this form of education, we learnt to observe the artistic abilities and the developmental stage of every individual student. Moreover, we were given numerous impulses as to how to teach the children the various contents in an appropriate way. At the start I identified primarily with this form of education's outer appearances, and it was primarily methodology that was very important for me in the first few years. Of course

an inner development was also taking place, but I wasn't as conscious of this as I was later, during the advanced teacher-training module.

This advanced level course was the setting in which lots of participants became more and more involved in the teacher's meditative life, as the centre from which each individual can get to grips with Waldorf education. Last August Ann Sharfman and Peter van Alphen introduced the subject of 'active listening' into our course – an important ability when working with colleagues or when mentoring other teachers. I was enthused by the methods they taught us for nurturing this ability, and by the space we were given during the course to practice it.

At first, I found it very difficult to get used to focussing entirely on my partner during a conversation. I was used to thinking about my answers during a conversation, instead of concentrating on really understanding what the other person wanted to tell me. Now I think that as time passes, and I continue to constantly practice, it will at some point become entirely natural to actively listen to my conversational partner. I was astonished to see what happened to me when I switched off my thoughts, and started to concentrate solely on what my partner was trying to communicate. I paid attention to body language, facial expression and vocal intonation – just as Ann and Peter had taught us. In so doing, I no longer needed to think about my answer, as an appropriate reaction presented itself in the right moment, as if by itself, between my partner and me. It was no longer about my thoughts, but rather about the thoughts of the person who was speaking at that moment. This helped me understand, why I feel



Participants at the Advanced Level Course of the East African Teacher Training Seminar. Silviah Njagi can be seen in the bottom right of the photo.

especially connected with particular friends: they simply listen to me, completely! Suddenly, out of these practical interactions, the Dalai Lama's words started to make sense to me.

During this year's annual feedback talk, I was delighted to receive the observation that my skill in active listening had improved substantially. In that moment I became conscious of the fact that the Advanced Level Seminar is the best thing that has ever happened for the cause of teacher development in East Africa. Teachers who already have a significant amount of teaching practice can profit from it to an uncanny degree.

I feel eternally grateful towards the people who facilitated the Advanced Level Training. The course was a huge help in finding access to one's own inner development potential. I notice that there is now more collegiality and a heightened consciousness for others, particularly in the teachers' conferences

at the school where I work. What we learnt has also proven useful in conflict resolution. Asanteni sana – or thank you, as we say in Swahili.

Silviah Njagi

Silviah Njagi is kindergarten teacher at the Nairobi Waldorf School in Kenya. Moreover, she also works for the East African Teacher Training Seminar (as we reported in the last newsletter). During her Master's Degree in Oslo, she was substantially supported by a scholarship from Friends of Waldorf Education

'Rainbow' – this small organisation near Tbilisi provides a loving home for orphans.



School Building and Children from the 'Education on the Periphery' Initiative in Saguramo

Georgia, this small state of many ethnicities but less than four million inhabitants lies south of the Greater Caucasus. Here you will find Saguramo, a very popular village, with a good reputation for rest and recreation. It's not far from Tbilisi, the capital city home to more than one million of the nation's inhabitants. Sixteen years ago an initiative started in Saguramo, managed by the Dutschidse family, called 'Education on the Periphery'. They began working with children and young people who were growing up in difficult circumstances or who have had mental health issues. This was an urgent necessity, because due to unacceptable conditions the state was closing down the extremely large state children's homes at that time, one after the other, and people were desperately looking for alternatives for these children.

On land which was partially gifted and partially bought, a wonderful wooden-house with a small doctor's surgery and a workshop was built. At first they paid the doctor with a couple of chickens rather than money and that's how they were able to start their small farm. While the agricultural practice developed slowly, with the building of a barn, then a stable, and the working of the first fields, the completion of the second house in 2004 made it possible to take on new foster children. More children joined the family when state reco-

gnition was achieved in 2008.

Every year the *Friends of Waldorf Education* enable a few volunteers to take part in the life and work of the small community. Presently, a small sport's pitch is being built behind the 'Rainbow House' with help from the company of the father of one of the volunteers. Training courses for prospective art therapists take place at the weekends and there are also occasional cultural events, staged for example together with the student orchestra from the Tbilisi Waldorf School.

Now, after all these years of caring work, the next step is becoming clearer. As the number of orphans is decreasing, while the number of families prepared to take in orphans is on the increase, there is a shift in what is needed. Increasingly, good living places are needed for so-called 'difficult' children, who in fact often have disabilities. Most of these children cannot be adequately looked after either in a mainstream home or in their families. 'Education on the Periphery' could become a suitable place for these children. But before such kids can find a new home for themselves here, a new building is needed. In cooperation with the *Friends*, the home's trustees are seeking to raise the necessary capital to finance this development.

Jaspar Röh

Jabuka Waldorf Kindergarten in Sarajevo

When I first visited Sarajevo's Jabuka kindergarten shortly after the war, you could still see the little flags marking still uncleared mines in the garden. In the city today, you can still see traces of war, as you could in East Berlin in the 1980s, but for most people this dark phase is over. Which doesn't mean that the world is completely bright. There are high levels of youth unemployment and corruption, and the sub-division of territory ordered by the Dayton Agreement has left the country with a huge bureaucracy with a fitting number of politicians to go with it. To top that, some unpleasant influences are being exerted by some Saudi Arabian parties, making for a generally complicated but mostly peaceful life. And everyone is certainly thankful for these peaceful conditions.

Leila Kostić built up the Jabuka Waldorf Kindergarten after completing her training at the Kassel Kindergarten Teacher Seminar. Eight young women have also trained as Waldorf Kindergarten teachers under her guidance and carry out sterling work. The children are happy, as they are the world over, that they're allowed to play both inside and out, and that the kindergarten teachers are unfazed, when they come wet and muddy back into the kindergarten. Listening to the story in a warm room is all the more pleasant after such damp escapades.

Normally both parents have to go to paid jobs, meaning the children are in the kindergarten from early in the morning until late in the afternoon. The small children sleep here, something which the bigger kids, the five-and-six-year-olds don't want to do of course. They are – just like the After School kids in the top-floor – as busy as bees, deeply engrossed in play-tasks they've chosen themselves. Luckily, some of the former kindergarten children can be looked after in the after-school provision, where they can engage in artistic activities – like music, painting and movement – as well as being able to talk about any questions they



Students from the Cologne Waldorf School help in the kindergarten during their art trip; view of the valley; children playing

have with Emir Korkut, who is actually always able to provide welcome orientation with his answers. The children really value this.

Enisa Spilidi, who worked for a period at Jabuka, has now founded a second Waldorf kindergarten. This opened its doors in September 2015 for one group, after it had rebuilt and attractively decorated its premises with some help from our side. And preparations have been begun for a third kindergarten. This kindergarten's future kindergarten teacher is currently taking part in the Waldorf Kindergarten Seminar in Zagreb. And so, out of a small bud, a small movement has come into being – not yet a strongly flowing river. Much patience and initiative will be needed before we reach that stage.

Nana Göbel



KYRGYZSTAN

A flying start for the third in-service Waldorf Teacher Training course in Bishkek

Kyrgyzstan is a small, mountainous country in Central Asia. Bishkek, its capital, lies as far south as Rome and as far east as Bombay. The city used to be a stop on the silk-road and is an important trading centre in Central Asia today. Usually the winters here are cold and the summers hot. But this year the winter has been far too warm, like in Europe. Although snow fell for a final time in mid-January, this quickly melted away in the above-zero temperatures.

For 25 years now, there has been an anthroposophical curative-education institution called Nadjeshda – 'hope' in English – whose intensive work has sown seeds in lots of places. In the last ten years more and more shoots have sprung from these seeds, so that now in Bishkek and in other lo-

cations in the country there are a total of seven kindergartens who work in accordance with Waldorf education or at least orientate themselves towards this; and alongside these are a number of curative-education institutions. Recently two initiatives to create Waldorf schools have gotten off the ground, one in the capital and the other in the countryside. More people than ever before are interested in Waldorf education and have joined together to form a network. Last autumn an educational advice centre was founded, to which parents can turn to get help and advice.

The third in-service Waldorf teaching course began in Bishkek at Arabajeva University on January 25 of this year, with 45 people taking part. They come from Waldorf kindergartens, kindergartens orienta-

ted on Waldorf methods, and state and Montessori institutions, both from Nadjeshda and from other schools and child education centres. These participants get into the subject matter with great interest and involvement, tackling material such as the Foundations of the Study of Man, the various Bodies and Spirit-Bodies of the human being, and the seven-year periods. Smaller groups work on topics either specific to kindergarten or specific to school, including the meaning of rhythm and play for the small child, the curriculum and structure of a Waldorf school, and the methodology of pictorial and imagerial teaching. The concluding presentations showed how deeply moved many participants were by the first weeks of the seminar and how many of the manifold interconnections they have already grasped. A flying start.

The International Association of Waldorf Kindergartens (IASWECE) and the *Friends of Waldorf Education* support this case financially. Responsibility for the course-contents lies with Karla-Maria and Igor Schälke from Bishkek, Olga Starostina, educationalist and director of Nadjeshda, who comes from Moscow, further Waldorf kindergarten teachers and lecturers from the Moscow Seminar—and with myself. These colleagues are supported by other lecturers for practical and artistic subjects.

The graduation ceremony for the last training course took place in the main hall of Arabajeva University in October 2015, and included a public presentation. 22 participants were able to receive certificates standing for their successful participation in the course. Other students still need to redo their graduation assignment or specific course elements. Some of these graduates work in Nadjeshda's Waldorf kindergarten and in Nadjeshda's other kindergarten and school. A further graduate works in the small Waldorf school in Almaty, Kazakhstan. One of the graduates is the director of a large state kindergarten in Novaya Buchtarma in Kazakhstan, a remote town in the foothills of the Altai Mountains. She is bursting with enthusiasm about Waldorf education and regularly brought new kindergarten teachers with her to the courses, so that they could work together reforming and re-conceptualising their kindergarten. One

group of kindergarten teachers comes from Batken, a high plain in the south of Kyrgyzstan, where the seven-thousand metre Pamir Mountains wave to you from afar. These people are now attempting to integrate elements of Waldorf education into their town or village kindergartens, and are being supported by the respective educational authorities in the process. People here value the practical and artistic proposals for everyday teaching practice contained in Waldorf education, but they also value the emphasis put on freedom in education, and the protection of individual dignity. Aspects visitors to the public graduation ceremony in October 2015 certainly noticed. Some of them have now become participants on the new course.

Wolfgang-Michael Auer

Dr. Wolfgang-M. Auer worked for 30 years as a teacher at the Bochum Rudolf Steiner School, Germany. Today he lectures for teacher-training and further training seminars for teachers and kindergarten teachers. He's also an enthusiastic grandfather, as he says himself.



Left and right: Impressions from Graduation Ceremony of the Previous Course

El Til.ler: The Lime Tree stretches out branches



The new Upper-School Building; Students from Class Seven

Finally, after over seven years of hard work – an area near Barcelona, very much shaped by Catalonia identity – now has a Waldorf school which runs from kindergarten up into the upper-school level. El Til.ler roughly means 'the lime tree is growing'. And the tree really is growing into a society which until now didn't have much time for schools which aren't Catholic or run by the state. Yet the lime tree is putting down roots and stretching out its branches – and the children are delighted. At last – the school no longer stops at the end of class six! Some of those involved can remember the drama of the early years, when the children had to change over to the state system after class six, where the students have to cram for an unending series of tests. A system, in which 30% of students drop out without obtaining any school-leaving qualification.

It was a long and exciting journey. At first it seemed unthinkable to us that it would be possible to raise hundreds of thousands of Euros in the middle of the Spanish financial crisis. And the search for suitable building land also turned out to be highly complicated – we inspected over 100 plots of land, some of which in processes lasting several which, to find out which, if any of them, it would be possible to build a school on. To know how difficult this actually was, you need to be familiar with the Spanish authorities.

After several years in which our efforts appeared to be in vain, we took the plunge and simply set a date for the start of the upper-school still without a plot of land and without sufficient financial means.

The educational preparations were intensified, with a group of teachers taking part twice annually in the Waldorf Upper-School Teacher Seminar in Buenos Aires in Argentina from that point of time onwards. With the help of vigorous support from the *Friends of Waldorf Education* and from two further foundations we were able to raise the money necessary, and the preparations for the new building could begin.

As we still had been unable to locate a larger building plot, we decided to use a smaller adjoining plot that would become home to the new upper-school. The fact that we needed to gain official recognition for the whole upper-school from the start meant that all new classrooms had to be built at once, which is what then happened, using a pre-fabricated, wooden structure. This facilitated a rapid construction of the new buildings and also carries the advantage with it that if a large building plot should be found for the whole school at some point in the future, then all these new buildings can be simply dismantled and reconstructed again. A solution which means that most of the money already invested in the recent building remains a good investment in case of relocation.

At the end of January this year it felt like we'd reached the finishing line – after five inspections we received the official document granting recognition to our upper-school. We've come a long way with this. The students are happy about their new rooms to learn in – and the mood is good. In order to give the school a solid, long-term foundation, we are striving to eventually buy land on which we could provide a home for the whole school, right up to the highest-level examination class.

Klaus Esser

Klaus Esser is a former Waldorf school student and now works as a music teacher at 'El Til.ler'. In addition, he gives courses at various Spanish Waldorf Seminars about music.

Steiner School Mbagathi: underneath the acacias and in between rubber tyres

It all started with an empty plot of land next to Nairobi National Park on which a few acacias grew. Back then, in 1989, giraffes and lions still roamed over the earth on which the school is now built. In the distance you can see the tower blocks of the financial metropolis.

Nani Croze, 71, former student at the Reutling Waldorf School in Germany and a glass artist, had the original idea and looked for fellow combatants. She is still on the board of the school's governing body and plays her part in forming its future. Alongside her, Judith Brown – a former student of the English Kings Langley School – has been teaching at the school for 21 years now and has built up the school to its current size. 330 children attend classes 1 – 9 and 120 children live in the school's own hostel.

When all these children are present, the little boys run along underneath the trees rolling the huge rubber tyres faster and faster in front of them – a whole lot of fun. The girls sit in little troops in the shade and chat. And when it's time to eat then everyone streams into the canteen, covered by a roof but only closed in on one side, and a room in which everyone still finds a seat. Thanks to the kitchen's staff – they still cook on a wood fire – everyone gets a warm meal. And that is certainly one important reason to enjoy coming to school.

At the start of each week, on Monday mornings, the students assemble between the two wings in which the classrooms are housed, and sit down on stone blocks, which form something like a small amphitheatre. They sing, start their work together and also find out who the current visitors at the school are. They all wear the same school uniform, something which is still normal in the regions in which the British formerly had colonies. Perhaps the uniforms could do with a bit more colour, yet is sensible to have a relatively plain uniform so that even the poor children have decent clothes to wear. German,



Steiner School Mbagathi: Final performance in the school hall; Painting in class 5; harvesting in the school garden

Danish and Swiss sponsors who pay the school fees for the families make the children's attendance at the school possible.

In the whole 26-year history of the school, this is the most peaceful, concentrated and balanced phase yet. The most important rooms have been built, the colleagues work well together and enjoy that communal work, some of the teachers are fantastic singers and have chalked up successes touring with their music – and there are no longer any colleagues of the sort who seem to take pleasure in initiating conflicts. Moreover, the business management is in the safe and experienced hands of Precious, a staff member who has established high structural standards, while Judith Brown has learned a way of dealing with African bureaucracy, through which she is able to successfully further the school's aims despite all obstacles put in the school's way. May this phase continue for a long time!

Nana Göbel

Social Therapy in South India



'Happy Diwali' they call out, all over the town. It is mid-November, last year, and people are loudly celebrating the Hindu festival of light, Diwali – comparable with Christmas. People create this intense noise level, by letting off fireworks for days and nights on end, for which people are happy to spend the last money they have. If they have any in the first place, that is.

In the conurbations of southeast India, the late monsoon rains cause water levels to rise and often lead to lengthy power cuts. At the hottest times of day temperatures occasionally break the 45-degree mark. While India has nuclear weapon capacity and is a leading global IT competitor, it has not yet been possible to provide all citizens with toilets. Where pavements exist at all, they are covered in rubbish and the streets are constantly congested. One reason for this are the cows, who in an enviably relaxed fashion wander and stop where they will, in accordance to the leader of the herd's wishes. On a four-lane intercity road for example, or at the ent-

rance to a bank or a petrol station. This proves a real challenge to us spoiled central Europeans.

To find a good antidote to the large urban experience, you should visit 'Friends of Camphill' on the edge of Bengaluru, the third biggest city in the country with roughly nine million inhabitants. This living and working community for young people with disabilities seems like an oasis in the desert. Surrounded by beautiful gardens in which fruit and vegetables are farmed, several workshops add to the possibilities on offer here. You can clearly see that the community members are doing well and a pleasant atmosphere prevails. Monkeys determined to steal are the biggest disturbance.

The founding family has lived here together with the 24 community members and many young volunteers, who mostly come to work here through the *Friends of Waldorf Education*. The community feels connected with the Camphill impulse and is a central location for anthroposophical social therapy in India. Religious diversity is practised, meaning



Music and celebratory feast as part of the festival of light, Diwali, at the 'Friends of Camphill' social-therapeutic institution. Below: cows on the streets of Bengaluru

that many festivals are celebrated together throughout the year.

One of these is the Festival of Light, which, unlike many of the festivals, is carried out in a fitting silence. People wear solemn and yet celebratory costumes, and the smell of good cooking fills the air. You eat with your fingers at the banquet, which takes place on the freshly cleaned stone floor. Before things start, the floor is decorated with mandalas and symbols of light drawn upon it, and the food is served according to a strict, ritual-like plan.

The Friends of Camphill's biggest wish now is to build a new home in the middle of nature, far from the big city. Land has already been purchased and is being farmed in accordance with biodynamic principles. Money is still lacking however to progress with the building. Only the future will tell if this wish can be fulfilled.

Thomas Kraus



Social Therapy in India

India ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2007 already, committing itself to improving the care and support given to these persons. However, it's actually been mostly urban dwellers that have profited from the changes. In rural areas a state system of care barely exists, even though this is where the large majority of people with disabilities live. At present there are four communities in India who orientate their work on anthroposophical social therapy and in which around 90 people are accompanied and supported.



Israel is a country full of contrasts. The atmosphere in the ancient part of Jerusalem, steeped in history, ranges from sublime to oppressive, while you could say the same about the feeling of living in Tel Aviv, a city forced up out of the desert ground in the shortest possible period of time. And the contrasts apply to the schools too – while the eurythmy lessons in Tal Shahar take place in a very attractive yurt, lunch in Sharma is served in a room which also serves as an air raid bunker. In Yodfat the social life of the school community is strongly shaped by the former interwoven lives of the kibbutzim, and the hard working lives they were full of, with much value being attached to craft activities. From the hill on which the school lies, you can let your gaze range over the stony valleys and hills where nomads used to roam. The relatively new Waldorf school in Tel Aviv, on the other hand, has just moved into the former building of a telecommunications company. The mostly young and extremely well organised parents are quite taken up by the task of negotiating the necessary recognition from the local mayor. It's not possible to gaze into the distance on the urban building plot, but this makes interpersonal contact all the more intense. If needs be, the school will fight for the school license they need with the best lawyers in the city. That too is an Israeli speciality: although nationwide laws exist for financing independent schools, if the local mayor is against you, then the school barely has a chance to develop down a proper legal path and to gain support.



Mexico – between two worlds



Left and Right: Students from the 'Escuela Waldorf de la Ciudad de Mexico'

Mexico is a country marked by contrasts. Particularly impressive are the prehistoric buildings and works of art left over from Mexico's great indigenous civilizations, including the legacies of the Mexica, Maya, Olmec and Zapotec tribes. Although Spanish has been the official state language since colonisation in the 16th century, 68 officially recognised indigenous languages survive in Mexico until this day - languages and not dialects, as some call them.

Seen geographically, Mexico is part of the North American continent, but common customs and the Spanish language means it identifies itself much more with Latin America. Poverty, corruption and criminality are omnipresent and levels of education

attainment are usually very low. Simultaneously, the country has produced a very rich elite. You could say that Mexico exists between two worlds - between old and new, north and south, megacity and rainforest, and rich and poor.

A number of Mexican Waldorf Schools take on these social challenges in their social and educational work. This impulse started during the Second World War, when Juan Berlin brought his vision of a Waldorf school to Mexico. Designated a 'half-Jew' by the Nazi regime, he was forced to flee from Germany in 1939, and was able to find refuge in Mexico. In 1955 he went on to found the first Waldorf school in Mexico City, which however soon had to close again due to economic reasons. A second attempt in 1971 only survived for four years, before the school was closed for political reasons. In 1986 a third and this time successful attempt was undertaken to establish a Waldorf school in the capital. The 'Escuela Waldorf de la Ciudad de Mexico' is now one of the mainstays of Mexican Waldorf Education.

Since then Waldorf schools have established themselves throughout the country. Yet the Waldorf approach still remains relatively unknown in Mexico. The last few years have, however, led to an ever-increasing number of parents who are searching earnestly for an educational alternative. They would like a more humane and more artistic form of schooling as that which the state schools offer.

Pilar Fenelón

Since training at the Waldorf Teacher Training Seminar in Mannheim, Germany, Pilar Fenelon worked first as a teacher, then later as a mentor and pioneer, at the 'Escuela Waldorf de la Ciudad de Mexico.'

The snowbirds come back for the summer

Louise deForest and Helle Heckmann, two experienced Waldorf Kindergarten teachers and professional mentors visited many new Mexican Waldorf kindergartens and initiatives last year. Louise deForest has shared this account of her observations and experiences.



You have to admire how these various little schools are slowly but surely putting down roots in places as diverse as tourist towns, poor villages, industrial areas and even in the middle of the jungle. Without knowing much about Waldorf schooling, parents have fought for a better education for their children and have made great personal sacrifices to establish and run these schools – and all that with no personal gain other than a good school. Parents invest much time, talent and money, in order to engage on behalf of their communities in general and of their children in particular. We could sense how new communities were constructing themselves around these schools during our visits to the individual institutions. Based around shared ideals, everyone involves attempts to perceive their work as partnerships between equals.

The teachers are also undertaking great efforts to bring this education system – which is often entirely new to them – to life, and to train themselves up regarding the curriculum. They do this with the few guides and tools available to them. We expe-

rienced the good will of many teachers who only earn a meagre salary, but who nevertheless achieve what seems impossible, and remain positive, warm-hearted and friendly. We were also impressed by the children, who, in most locations we visited, were surprisingly open, ready to help, polite and respectful towards their teachers – and caring in their dealings with the younger children.

Challenges

Most Mexican Waldorf initiatives face similar challenges to those faced the whole world over: teachers who are still inexperienced, a lack of knowledge of the fundamentals of Waldorf education and of child development, the large obstacle they face in overcoming both 'themselves' and their own educational backgrounds, conflicts between colleagues, and last, but not least, the belief that Waldorf education is simply a series of educational recipes strung together to make the 'Waldorf Way'. These are all things we observed during our journey.



Impressions from Mexican Waldorf Schools

At school many children suffer from many of the same ailments and difficulties which are also to be found in other countries: deficiencies in quantity of sleep and in dietary terms, a lack of early years input, stress (albeit less than elsewhere), an unrythmical daily life, and movement and language disorders. Mexican families are very strong and loving communities and their children are most precious to them. In terms of classroom practice we observed that older children are often far too mothered at school. They aren't trusted with even the smallest of difficulties and hardly need to take on any responsibility. Their freedom is severely restricted by continuous admonishing to always be careful, clean and orderly. Anything which could potentially

cause pain, i.e. knives, tools, climbing up things or other forms of experiment are consciously avoided.

For many new schools, which are in any case built on shaky financial foundations, over staffing is a big burden. An additional assistant teacher can be found even in classes with low pupil numbers, and several cooks and gardeners for the school are often the norm. This is partly due to cultural reasons, as many families have household helps and these constitute a status symbol. It is difficult for a teacher to give the children chores to do when an adult employee normally carries out such tasks for the whole family. This tendency is underlined by the fact that being with one another socially is valued very highly – and people experience it as un-



pleasant to be alone. All adults involved put great efforts into ensuring that the students are always accompanied.

Lots of teachers were very interested in our observations and possible improvements for the children during the time we worked together. This was often a need to go deeper methodologically, but we also sensed a genuine desire to develop personally. There were occasionally incidents that disturbed me, but these were always overridden by my observations that the children were essentially well looked after and that their daily schedule also possessed a healthy rhythm. And in every kindergarten we visited, we were able to experience educational activities which 'streamed out' healthy energies to the children and their families.

Classified as a newly industrialised country and immediate neighbour of the USA, Mexico is now lumbered with a rather negative image. Although its inhabitants theoretically love its rich culture, in practice everything which comes from the USA and Europe is valued more highly. As a rule, light skin colours are preferred to darker ones, non-traditional dishes are more highly rated than traditional cuisine and foreigners are granted more credence than Mexicans. Which makes it very difficult to integrate traditional Mexican culture with its images, stories and festivals into the schools. Perhaps this is a question of time, as some schools are more developed in this respect than others. But in a country with such a rich history and such a blessed and astonishing craft tradition, it is sad to see how little of this cultural inheritance has been put into the life of the schools up till now.

Moreover, Mexico has been shaped by its long history of submission to authorities. Displeasure

or critical positions are rarely voiced to teachers or headteachers, even when this would be justified. A collegial way of working together where attempts are made to knock down hierarchies leads at first to distrust. It is often difficult to talk directly about conflicts or difficulties, or to win the favour of new parents for such communication methods.

Many schools are also growing too quickly and with oversized dimensions. Of course Mexico is not alone in this, but it was there that I experienced for the first time how a whole school, from kindergarten up to class 6, was 'created' at one stroke. The consciousness that is necessary to carry a school long-term has to come into being in the first place, whereas many initiatives which we visited imagined that they could build up an upper-school concurrently to the very first years of a school being founded.

Yucatán

Nature on the whole Yucatán Peninsula, and particular in the Quintana Roo State is as fragile as ecological balance in the jungle. And this is the region where surprisingly many Mexican Waldorf schools are to be found. They go out of their way to use renewable energy sources and to use natural building materials, meaning that solar energy, recycling, composting, and composting toilets all have major roles to play. The natural environment is highly respected, which manifests itself in the efforts to retain nature's beauty. The Ak Lu'um school has even been awarded a state prize for the 'greenest school' in the region.

Change happens quickly here, with restaurants opening and disappearing again before you've even noticed. New trends sweep like wildfire through

this region, and while some remain, most never catch on. And in a place like this, renowned for its dreamlike beaches, you meet many people who are here on a quest to find themselves, a new life, or to follow this or that new guru; and some who are just looking for drugs. Lots of alternative movements, religions or trends pull people towards them, before disappearing as soon as they had arrived, and sadly this effects the teachers too. Many commit to working at a school, only to change their minds again one day before term starts, or resign without giving more than two days, notice. People need a lot of strength to be able to put down roots here and to stay true to themselves.

A place where the solid meets the fluid in geological terms too, with subterranean reservoirs under the whole peninsula. Large rivers flow just beneath the brittle surface and are often visible at the many cenotes. These chalk sinkholes, gouged out over long periods of time, are filled with fresh water.

Strongly fluctuating student numbers in the holiday locations mean a special challenge for the schools. In each Waldorf Education initiative there are additional pupils in winter, when the 'snowbirds' return to town, but also holiday children, who only attend school very irregularly. It's laborious work creating a family atmosphere in a kindergarten when the children only come sporadically or when the composition of the group changes several times in a year. It is also a big task for the schools to meet the needs of at least three different cultures in such a way that each one feels that they are taken seriously and supported. Mexicans, Americans and Canadians and Europeans are the biggest groups joining the schools, each group bringing its varying expectations and needs along with it.

This movement needs mentorship

Teacher training can only deliver so much in preparing teachers for being teachers. After that in-service support and mentorship is required. In light of the many and varied tasks and extraordinary conditions facing teachers, some form of continuous mentorship is urgently needed. However, transport costs are expensive and the schools are isolated. Many teachers feel abandoned and alone in their work. The financial situation is not good and the schools have little money. Which is why they have to save up for several years in order to participate in conferences or workshops. A work-placement at one of the countries established Waldorf schools is also a big challenge, as only one or two such schools exist. And again, costs for travel and the cover-teaching which would be needed quickly turn this proposal into a far off dream.

To date there are 21 Waldorf schools and initiatives in Mexico, but every couple of months I hear about new initiatives.

Louise deForest

After many, many years working as a Waldorf kindergarten teacher, Louise deForest is now working in numerous countries as an independent mentor and in training teachers. She's a board member of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America and represents North America in the International Association of Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education".



Ak Lu'um: this little jewel's in danger



Impressions of Ak Lu'um

Playa del Carmen lies on the Mexican peninsula of Yucatán. People normally travel there to have a holiday on the white sandy beaches of the Riviera Maya, which stretch for miles. But if you were to follow a seemingly unspectacular sign with a tortoise on it at the end of the town for a mile or so, then you'd be in for a big surprise. On through wide cul-de-sacs, there to provide access for new building plots, you finally come, via ever-narrower tracks, to the Ak Lu'um Waldorf School in the middle of the jungle. Temperatures here often rise above the 30-degree mark with a similar level of humidity. If you're outside the wood and in the sun, this gets unbearable in the morning already, but here, in the middle of the lively and slightly moving shadows, a pleasant warmth prevails.

We've been invited to the assembly to commence the school year and enter through the gate. The winding paths lead from one small building to the next. A shining, little red house with a palm leaf roof greets us, followed by a light walled building with curvaceous forms. They have been built from traditional materials and some of them remind us of traditional Maya huts with their round, organic forms. The school provides itself with its own solar energy. There is no air conditioning, but there is a mechanical fan, the blades of which turn with a majestic calm as they hang down from a bamboo pole.

You're aware of the respectful way of dealing with nature and its treasures everywhere here. We're surrounded by a cheerful bustle of parents and children who are just arriving, and are being greeted gaily by the teachers. Fruit is served – man-

gos, papaya and melons. Everyone congregates and introduces themselves to each other in English and in Spanish, as this is a bilingual school. The special nature of this school reveals itself not only in its environmental consciousness, which forms a crude contrast to the mundane hotel complexes and the gigantic supermarkets of the region, but also in its social engagement – there are scholarships for disadvantaged families and also the possibility of temporary help in emergency situations. This means, as you might think, that the parents are a colourful mix: light-skinned individuals standing next to Maya families, black haired Mexicans beside blond people from England.

When we get back to the hotel, the world seems to be more meaningful and more full of hope. How good it is to know that this isn't just a place where the entertainment industry and the destruction of nature dominate.

Yet when we arrive back in Germany, we receive disturbing news: the school's rent for land rental has risen steeply and the most sensible solution would be to buy the building plot. Something which will only be possible with the help of many friends and their small and large donations.

Agnes Hammerstein

Agnes Hammerstein was born in Mexico City and spent the first seven years of her life there. She is an anthroposophical curative education teacher. In this capacity, she has also contributed to further teacher training for Waldorf teachers in Mexico City.



Children learning in schools supported by the International Aid Fund

INTERNATIONAL RELIEF FUND

It rustles, chinks, clatters – and works!

How the Friends of Waldorf Education use money

Water follows the laws of gravity and makes the riverbed as it flows. Constantly moving, the river flows round one obstacle after the next to bring the cool wetness out of regions, which have been gifted with rain, to other places where it itself can gift life. If untamed, a mighty river can cause massive damage, yet if it remains too weak, it seeps away before it can reach its aim.

Water flowing can also be used as an image for how the *Friends of Waldorf Education* work with money. An individual's intention to support a Waldorf school abroad is like a spring, and the 'water' then flows along with our help, for example to a new initiative which needs support, but which has hardly attracted any attention. The water needs a 'river bed' to make its way there, a smooth and consciously created route, on which money can flow to the initiatives we support. Quite different to foundations who work with the operating income from their assets, the *Friends* aim to act and negotiate like a gifting bank. We receive gifts in the shape of money donations and then enable these to flow worldwide, to places where they can have an impact.

Donations that reach the *Friends* have various forms, qualities, but also agendas, each varying from one donation to the next. One day a small jar of loose change from a coffee-and-cake benefit ends up in our hands, the coins in it chinking chirpily. The next day a colleague brings back an envelope from a journey to a school, which has held a WOW action day. The paper contents rustle as they are unfolded. Most money however reaches us digitally – and can only be heard through the bustling tapping and clicking of the computers in the bookkeeping department.

Depending on the origin and on the aims of the donations, entirely different qualities in this substance of money become perceptible. Building projects financed by the Federal Ministry for Development move large sums and are accompanied by strict accounting and usage rules. This can, for example, make a whole new building possible, but brings with it other external obligations which must be fulfilled. Decades later, we still have to take responsibility for these investments. In comparison, a donation from an education-sponsor doesn't gift a building, but rather time at school. Such donations

help cover operating costs and contribute to a continual stream to a specific school, which is supported while it grows. This is an extraordinary and invigorating quality for those schools which struggle every month to pay their bills.

Money which is gifted in the form of scholarships doesn't just support future teachers during their studies, but also expresses of the large trust we have in their future work. The warm connectedness of a donor to a particular school can be experienced through specified donations. Contrast this with unspecified donations towards our International Relief Fund that grant us much-needed room to manoeuvre. Whenever rapid financial help is needed or when we can achieve much in a newly developing project with limited means, we are able, thanks to such donations, to make a prompt decision about support and send the necessary money on its way.

We take the obligations and duties that come with the money entrusted to us very serious indeed. An important foundation for achieving this is the German legislation governing Non-Profit-Organisations, with its strict criteria as to how donations may be used and its demands of meticulous standards in bookkeeping records, which are then audited annually. In addition to this, the charitable status of the receiving organisation also has to be audited and the exact money flow process documented – which, depending on the country and the language, isn't always easy. After receiving each donation we categorise the donation, book it into our accounting system and occasionally contact the donator again personally, to find out for exactly which of our many projects the donation is intended.

We then issue a receipt of donation. As soon as the money flows on from our account, we contact

the donee, who then confirms the safe arrival of the donation soon after. During all this, it's important for us to monitor in a mindful fashion the short and long-term effects of the donation streams. Gifted money is needed to bring many projects all over the world to life in the first place, but it can also lead to dependencies, which could prevent institutions from establishing their own firm financial basis long-term.

That's why we have small and large streams of money, some precisely targeted, others with more room for freedom. And so that they can flow, a whole number of rather 'dry' processes must be carried out in our Berlin office, to prepare the riverbed. This work takes place in accordance with our continuing principle of forwarding 100% of the money donated, without any deductions to cover our office's running costs. Particularly for small projects, every euro counts. In addition, through its very simplicity this system creates transparency and frees us from any conflicts of interest regarding the donations.

However, it also means that we need people on a continuing basis who make a conscious decision to support our work through a targeted donation towards our running costs or by taking part in *Action 10 %*. Even our riverbed needs 'live-gifting water', so that we can employ staff, buy stamps or carry out consulting work.

We accept with great thanks the years of untiring, industrious support granted to us by our donors. These people sponsor the Waldorf School, curative therapy and social therapy movement worldwide and are the ones who make our engagement for Waldorf Education possible in the first place.

Jaspar Röh

A SINCERE REQUEST:

We invite you to become a sustaining member or to participate in our 10% campaign.

You may set the amount of your contribution by yourself and help us to support institutions worldwide.

Education Sponsorships in Gödölö gift courage and time to learn

Three years ago the Hungarian Waldorf movement found themselves in an intensively difficult situation, partly caused by dramatic cuts in the state financing of Waldorf schools. At this point in time the *Friends of Waldorf Education* visited us, which cheered us up no end – in difficult situations such as these, courage can grow if transmitted through face-to-face dialogues.

We sat together and gave each other an introduction to our activities and our fields of activity. That's how we found out about the education sponsorships and our interest was immediately aroused.

We soon agreed in the teacher's conference that we wanted to take part in the sponsors program. I still remember that the first step back then was to translate a large pile of documents and to then send thee to *the Friends*. Simultaneous to this, we talked about the opportunity with our school community and with individual families, who were at that time in severe financial difficulty.

To be honest, I didn't have any big hopes at first. I thought that it's bound to take some months or even longer until we find individuals who want to support our students. So the surprise was all the bigger, when we quite quickly found out that a sponsor for one of our students had applied. This moment touched me deeply. The mother of this son was a single parent, and was stuck herself in a hopeless situation

The education-sponsors' donations takes the pressure of all our school community's parents, and also enables children whose parent can only afford a low-level of school fees to attend the school. This remains one of the most important elements of our mission statement: all students to whose admission a class teacher has agree should be able to visit the school, irrespective of their financial background. The education sponsorships play a central role in

turning this ideal into reality, while ensuring that the teacher's salaries still get paid.

Since that first positive response, many more education sponsors have been found, for which we are very grateful. Every occasion when an individual or a community considers us and the work we do worthy of support moves us. Our sponsors differ greatly, and include singles, extended families, a whole Waldorf school class or a company. In a similar way, communication between our sponsors and ourselves varies widely. Some sponsors don't provide or don't have an email address, gifting to us unconditionally and with a big show of trust, while others remain in regular email contact and display a lively interest.

One year ago, we went through another new development – launching the class sponsorship scheme. We were again uncertain as to whether we'd get any responses. But to our great astonishment, we were contacted in no time at all by someone stating their readiness to become our first 'whole class sponsor'. This first class sponsor turned out to be a whole company! Sharing one part of that company's profits with us is certainly a fantastic idea.

Our school community doesn't just experience the education sponsor's support in a material sense, but also as a strengthening of our common inner energy. Through the sponsoring process, we get to know so many lovely people and with them utterly new ways of thinking and living. Not least because we are so grateful for this, we attach much value to maintaining regular and caring relationships between the school families and their sponsors. We're happy to see that this works very well in general, when all's said and done. And so the written exchange in letter and email form continues, in the form of reports about the everyday, or about special experiences.



Children who can be sponsored and a class looking for an education sponsor can be found from page 43 onwards



Godolló Waldorf School: Letters to the Education Sponsors; Children Playing; Jump over the Fire, during the Summer Festival

Twice a year, once shortly before Christmas and again in the summer, things become turbulent again for me, as this is when I organise the putting together and translations of the thank-you letters. The teachers write a report about each individual sponsored child and the children make things and draw with great enthusiasm for their sponsors. The positive responses from the sponsors, who are delighted to get the post and feel recognize, are a sign of how worthwhile this thanking task is. And often I get caught up myself in this correspondence.

We would of course be more than happy to benefit from further class-sponsorships in the future, whether from an individual person, from another

school class, or from a company. Each and every donation is for us a huge present, which is always needed and which always aids our school.

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all our dear sponsors and to the staff at *Friends*, particularly to Mr. Michael for his extraordinarily diligent work.

Judit Kecskés

I myself am a teacher at the Gödöllőer Waldorf School and also work for of our Board of Trustees. In this latter capacity, I'm also responsible for our cooperation with the Friends, one of the most pleasant tasks that I carry out at present!



Working together for each other
as part of the worldwide student
campaign: Waldorf One-World Day

The 22nd WOW-Day will take place this year! We want to warmly invite all schools and curative education institutions to organise a WOW-Day on a single day in October or November, from which one hundred percent of the proceeds will flow to Waldorf schools and social projects spread out across the world. All necessary information, tips and materials for employers etc. can be found under 'WOW-Day' on our website.

>>> www.freunde-waldorf.de



Make a difference worldwide

Anyone still bidding? Great – going for the first, for the second, for the third time. And the painting is yours! That's how it sounded like in a school last year, at a big WOW-Day auction at which pictures drawn and painted by the students were auctioned. At another school, a mother took responsibility for proceedings. After making plans with the teachers, this mother met with a class for one lesson every week for a month, to ask the students which causes they wanted to put the effort in for and which activities appealed to them. Working completely autonomously, the class then organised a café, planning menus, prices and working times, all by itself. The action came off well, resulting in proud and thoughtful students sitting together afterwards in a reflective mood. What a lovely feeling, to have made this happen together! But did we do everything right? Were the prices for the food really fair? And will the proceeds really make any difference?

Almost hundred sixty five schools took part last year, with students from 30 countries throughout the world taking part in WOW-Day 2015! The activities which students, teachers and parents dream up and then carry out for WOW-Day are as abundantly mixed as different flowers in a colourful bouquet. All participants giving their best together on a single day, is what all these projects have in common. Whether this is physical work or making music in a pedestrian precinct, or whether, in the case of a sponsored walk or run, body and spirit are fighting for each additional kilometre, WOW-Day is certainly a special experience for the participants. And because the proceeds will help at a later point of time in a different corner of the globe, something international comes to live at each participating school. Suddenly considerations arise as to how students from other parts of the world are doing. Perhaps even our European neighbours learn and live under quite different conditions than ours? And what about on the other side of the ocean. How is a normal school day structured on a tropical island, and how would the same

question be answered regarding schools up Andean peaks or South African valleys?

In order to get to this stage, at which so many supportive connections at schools worldwide are systematically networked with each other, WOW-Day has been on a long, long journey. After the Norwegian Waldorf Teacher Astrid Bjønnes had the idea for a student social campaign, at a meeting of the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education in 1994, it was at first primarily schools in Scandinavia and Germany which took part. In the years which followed, WOW-Day spread and developed itself, thanks to many helping hands.

In recent years, it was Olivia Girard who coordinated and accompanied the work of WOW-Day for the *Friends of Waldorf Education*, right up to it 'coming of age' at its 21st birthday last year, and now fully deserving the title of a worldwide campaign. The German Federal Association of Free Waldorf Schools also joined the work as a supportive partner, and through the cooperation between this organisation and the *Friends* we are able to ensure a particularly vigorous participation by the German schools.

It's especially important for our upper school students' engagement in the project for them to be able to work in a company for a day for WOW-Day. At this point, the *Friends'* telephone started to ring wildly each year, making it clear that clear legal security is needed at this stage in the process, because laws governing employee protection and fulfilments of tax regulations are strict and complicated in this regard. Thanks to the Federal Association of Free Waldorf Schools' solicitor, a path was found, with which all legal questions to social security payments, tax etc. could be clarified and simplified. Now it is not a big administrative matter for either employers or schools to facilitate Waldorf students to work in their organisations for a day, to the benefit of many Waldorf schools worldwide.

Jaspar Röh

The war has arrived in the middle of Europe.



Above: Painting and Music Therapies at the Sentilj Refugee Camp, Slovenia.

Below: Movement Exercises and Painting Therapy on the Island of Lesbos, Greece

Right: Balancing Exercises in Slovenia

France

In November a therapeutic and educational team travelled to Paris straight after the attacks. Seven of our volunteers were in the Stade de France stadium in Saint-Denis on November 13, 2015, to watch the France versus Germany football game, when the bombs went off. Our emergency educationalists talked with and listened to them, and also communicated practical exercises so that they could cope better with what they had just experienced. The teachers of the 'Ecole Perceval Chatou' were advised during a seminar session as to how to relate to traumatised students. They were taught the basics of psychological traumatology and how to provide suitable pedagogical responses to the situation. How can parents and teachers provide the children with a way of orientating themselves, when we talk

about terror? What should we say, when they ask us about good and evil, and about why people do such things?

Greece

'Please stay! We need you!' That's what the *Friends of Waldorf Education's* emergency education team heard at the end of their assignment. In October that team supported traumatised refugee children on the island of Lesbos. Countless rubber dinghies reached the island every day, carrying a total of several thousand refugees. Each boat reaching the shores had tragedies to report. Many of the arrivals – totally soaked and suffering from hypothermia – are bordering on a physical and mental breakdown. Others appear to be euphoric, as they assume that

the worst is now behind them. They simply cannot guess what still awaits them.

The apparently endless streams of refugees stretch out in chains across the hilly island, looking like lines of ants as they look for the registration camps. A consistent mass of almost 10 000 people are to be found, tightly packed together, in front of Camp Moira, waiting to be admitted. After negotiations, it is possible for the *Friends* team to get several children who are in a life-threatening situation admitted into the camp to get acute medical treatment. The unbearably claustrophobic circumstances inside turn on and exacerbate themselves. Two police officers provide the children with just enough to keep them alive, but without any form of educational support. An atmosphere of despair, aggression and fear prevails.

Suicide attempts are a daily affair. Nevertheless, the education workers manage to reach these very children who are so existentially threatened, and find ways to integrate them into constructive social processes. They take part in circle games and exercises, clap and paint. One of our staff members reported, that on the first days after initial contact had been made, a group of boys call her name from behind the gate already, full of anticipation for the communal activities. A few weeks later, a Norwegian colleague told me that she had met three of the boys from Moira later back in her home and Norway – and they're still singing the same songs, that they sang in the camp with the *Friends*.

Slovenia

The so-called Balkan Route is one big picture of suffering. A trail of sheer endless convoys slopes from the temporarily constructed railway platform to Šentilj, the Slovenian refugee camp. Here 7000 to 10,000 refugees cross the Spielfeld border crossing into Austria every day, accompanied by heavily armed police units. There are many children amongst the refugees, a considerable number of whom are unaccompanied. People are packed incredibly tight into the mass camps, which are heated only in the most provisional way. Many of the refugees are either ill or injured. The Slovenian Red Cross' emergency hospital is running at over capacity. 'This is

war medicine, what we're doing here', says a doctor, almost ashamed about the standards of medical treatment that are possible. The food, which the kitchen workers dish out while police guard them, is very limited. Sometimes there's only one spoonful of soup and one piece of bread left for the last people in the queue. 'This is really about administering a shortage', as one of the many voluntary helpers commented.



The principal aim of the emergency educational workers is to stabilise the children emotionally and to support them in such situations. Such interventions make it easier for those dealing with trauma to work through their burdensome experiences. Thus, flashbacks can be interrupted and panic attacks de-intensified. Eurythmy and movement games work against the paralysing disinclination to movement and help people deal with psychological trauma. A ritualised daily structure offers a source of strength, orientation and security. Painting, drawing, music and dance can be welcome curative modes of expression, if children are unable to talk about their experiences.

Further Training and Annual Conference

Training seminars and professional educational courses taught by emergency educationalists in Germany and abroad where a further important element of our work over the last few months. We are looking forward to the forthcoming emergency education annual conference in May with much joy. This is titled, 'War – Fleeing – Trauma', and takes place in Karlsruhe, Germany.

Reta Lüscher-Rieger

Federal Volunteer Service in Connection with Refugees in Germany



The size of the stream of refugees entering Germany presents huge challenges for the whole of the country. We considered, on the one hand, the scale of the help needed, and on the other hand, the number of people who wanted to contribute their work and skills – and out of this a program came into being, through which people can complete a period of volunteer service in connection with the refugees in Germany.

An extension of the federal law regulating volunteer service established the legal foundations, on which several thousand additional volunteer jobs aiding refugees in Germany will be set up and financed. The *Friends of Waldorf Education* will take part in the first year of this scheme, providing around 80 such volunteer jobs. 'Federal Volunteer Service in Connection with Refugees' offers people who want to help

the opportunity of getting involved in looking after, accompanying and acting as citizen-partners for the refugees.

Under this scheme, the deployment of volunteers is organised in accordance with various tasks and challenges in relation to refugees. These include providing cultural and educational activities in refugee accommodation centres, accompanying refugees to appointments with the government authorities, and offering interpreter services and transport services. Work in the organisation and coordination in connection to refugee accommodation and provision, help sorting and distributing donations in kind, sharing out groceries and helping in a school class for refugees are all further examples of possible tasks that can be undertaken as part of the volunteer service scheme.

Moreover, it is also possible for refugees and asylum-seekers themselves to participate in Federal Volunteer Service, under the supervision of a recognised volunteer centre. The legal requirement for this is that their residence in Germany is 'in accordance to the law and can be expected to be of a considerable period of time'. All volunteers who perform volunteer service as part of this special scheme will receive special educational support. The refugees taking part can, if necessary, also undertake a language course lasting one to four weeks, which should ideally be completed before the period of volunteer service begins.

Potential volunteer centres can therefore either employ refugees in accordance with the Federal Volunteer Service scheme, or they can work with German volunteers, engaging in activities that have a connection to the refugees. Furthermore, it is possible to either request the *Friends* to provide additional volunteer places, or to turn existing 'standard' volunteer jobs, into jobs which have an officially recognised connection to refugees.

Christoph Hermann



Left: Balancing Exercises at the Federal State Initial Reception Centre in Karlsruhe
 Right: A Refugee Class at the Parzival School in Karlsruhe, Germany

A New Advice and Coordination Centre

In order to react better to the many questions coming from Waldorf schools about refugee issues, a new advice centre was set up last autumn in Karlsruhe in cooperation with the Federal Association of German Waldorf Schools. This centre now exists to support Waldorf schools in all questions concerning the inclusion of and support for refugee children. These might be educational questions, for which the wealth of experience gathered by our emergency educational workers will prove useful, or questions about the administration and coordination of a new Welcoming Class.

This centre also offers support on issues concerning taking on volunteers for service in connection with refugees, so that legal, financial and educa-

tional questions can be clarified. Additionally, institutions can use the centre to inform themselves generally about the new volunteer service schemes – the coordinating and advisory team is happy to offer initial information and advice on all these topics.

The advice centre also aims at supporting and enriching schools exchanging information with each other. Further Training courses in this field are also facilitated, and any inquires as to information events and training / workshop leaders can also gladly be dealt with.

Contact at the Advice Centre for Schools

Susanne Stoll

Tel.: +44 (0)721 354806-131

Email: fluechtlingshilfe@freunde-waldorf.de



VOLUNTARY SERVICE

How a bus driver can make you happy

'My name's Juana, I come from Columbia and I'm 24 years old.'

Those were the only words that I could say fluently in German after arriving in Germany a few months ago. And these words were enough to open a new chapter in my life.

What am I doing here so far from home and almost entirely lacking language skills? Through the Friends of Waldorf Education I got the opportunity of completing a fixed-term period of voluntary service in Germany. I would live in this country for a year as a volunteer and work at a school called the Parzival-Centre. These were the only details I knew

before arriving and I was very eager to find out how things would really be.

In the Parzival-Centre I work in a refugee class and try to help the children learn German. Yet for me my service period is not just about my work, but also about my everyday experiences. It's about getting to know new people, discovering another new segment of the world, and being able to understand interrelationships.

My voluntary service and the training seminars which accompany it are part of the INGLOS-Program. This is a special program, which not only facilitates the participation in a volunteer scheme, but

also supports the potential volunteer in their search for a concrete volunteer place and a host family. Furthermore, INGLOS helps finance travel costs to the host country. Regular seminars enable volunteers to see 'the big picture' behind volunteer service schemes. One seminar has remained particularly strong in my memory. Participants were there from South America, Africa, Asia and Europe. Representatives from the institutions where we had been placed, from the sending organizations like the Friends and representatives from the institutions abroad. Through sharing our experiences with each other we also gave each other something and the importance of these programs became clear to me. I can remember how people talked about how much interest the volunteers showed in their work, sometimes in the form of joy, sometimes from the knowledge angle. The experiences were so manifold.

To finish, I'd like to tell you a story which I also told the delegates at the INGLOS seminar. It was my first week in Germany. It was difficult to understand the language and I could only string a few words together before my brain starting to feel like it was frozen. I had to go to work and had written down on a piece of paper which buses and trains I had to take. On the first day everything functioned well. The buses and trains were punctual and I didn't have to worry. I felt very grateful that the public transport system functions so well in this country. On the second and third day I got on the bus, after I had made sure that it was the number 110. Suddenly the bus entered a roundabout, driving the opposite direction than usual! I quickly went to the bus driver and asked him if this bus went to the train station in Malsch. Looking at me in a not very friendly way, he made clear to me that I was in the wrong bus. I got out and waited for the next 110 bus. When I got on it, I asked the bus driver, in German, in a very shy and quiet voice 'Malsch Station?' With a little nod of his head, he assented.

Next morning, I was very insecure and nervous, although taking the bus is actually something simple. I kept on repeating my question about my destination in my head, so that I could pronounce it very clearly. When at last the bus came and the doors opened, I saw the same bus driver as on the day be-

fore – from the right bus – and asked again 'Malsch Station' and he answered 'yes'. That's how I learned that the same bus driver would drive the bus every day, and every morning I was happy to see his familiar face, because I then knew that I was on the right bus. Every time when I got on, I smiled straight at him, saying 'good morning!' cheerfully. However, this man didn't know the reason for my joy and he didn't answer me once. But I didn't care, because I really was happy to see him. This went on for about two weeks. Then one day I got on the bus and before I could say anything, the bus driver looked at me, smiled and said 'morning!' That made me so happy!

That was when I realised that my culture's openness lives inside me and I take it with me, wherever I go. And I saw that the smallest things in my everyday life can contribute to cultural exchange.

Juana Botero Gómez



Left: Refugee Class at the Parzival Centre in Karlsruhe, Germany; Volunteers at an INGLOS-Seminar in Berlin. Photo right, first from left: Juana Botero Gomez

A large gift from the Berlin-Mitte Waldorf School

Even before the wall had fallen, an East Berlin initiative group formed aimed at founding a Waldorf school, which then opened with 140 students and 5 classes on September 3, 1990. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Berlin-Mitte Waldorf School the school community decided to take a special step. To donate one part of the surplus from the previous financial year, €42,500 to be exact, to the Shanti Initiative in Nepal, to international teacher training and to one Russian language school in Eastern Europe. This large gift should also be understood as an expression of thanks for the manifold support from partner institutions and individuals during the school's first years, and as an expression of joy in relation to our stable economic situation.

Difficult times for Blagoje Delo

Russia: 'Blagoe Delo' near Yekaterinburg, beyond the Urals, is fighting for its survival. The fall of the rouble combined with the sanctions means that the social-therapeutic day centre for adults with special needs now finds itself in an existential emergency. Half of the staff, many of them who have a disability themselves, had to be made redundant last year, because wages could no longer be paid. The impossibility of paying either electricity or heating bills last year has led to threats to cut off the heating, even during the minus temperatures of this winter just gone. This must be contrasted that the joy that the people with disabilities get out of working there, which really is catching. Up to 50 young adults come to work every day. The institution has just been recognised as Russia's best institution for people with disabilities, accompanied by a certificate, flowers and much praise – but unfortunately not with the urgently needed financial support. Perhaps the First World Congress for People with Disabilities, which is due to take place in Yekaterinburg in September 2017 in cooperation with the government, could change the situation somewhat. Many troubled months have to pass, however, until then.



Recognition for the first international Waldorf School in Hong Kong



China: in 2013, the Forest House Waldorf School began with a class one. After necessary legal structures and working groups had been established, a loan was taken out and a school building constructed near Clearwater Bay in the north of Hong Kong. At present, the Hong Kong educational system is going through big changes, while, simultaneously, many parents are looking for alternative schools in which their children can develop in an environment free of anxiety. This is the context in which the Fo-

rest House Waldorf School grew quickly, soon reaching the level of 19 students, at which a school license is mandatory. All questions which remained open were cleared up in an intensive evaluation process carried out by the Ministry for Education, during which the school was supported by the *Friends of Waldorf Education*, amongst others. The good news arrived in February of this year – the education authority had granted the license. Now, after three years of intensive start-phase work, Hong Kong has its first recognised Waldorf School.

Architecture for Children



How can architecture for children be formed and structure? This is the question posed in the new double-issue of the magazine 'Mensch+Architektur' – or, in English, 'Human Architecture'. This presents around 50 Waldorf kindergartens from the last twenty years, both in Germany and from around the world. Included are new buildings, substantial renovations, crèches, areas for full day childcare, and three state kindergartens, which have made use of formative aspects of organic architecture. Individual authors tackle the questions of which

kinds of architecture and use of colour are suitable for children. An interview describes the early phase of sculptural architecture in Waldorf schools. The spectrum of architectural form elements used in Waldorf kindergartens has become refreshingly large, especially regarding building materials and construction methods, for example wood and straw-bale construction. To order a brochure, please go to: www.mensch-und-architektur.org

A New Music Therapy Room for Temi.



Georgia: the TEMI centre in the village of Gremi in Georgia wants to provide a home for the poor and disadvantaged. Homeless and neglected orphans and people with a major disability come to this place. There is a small school, a vineyard and a furniture workshop. From a total of around 70 people, less than half receive a few euros of state support every day. The majority of the residents who have care needs, including the children, receive no financial help whatsoever. This is why the community needs to earn the means they need every year through self-sufficiency, by selling products and through voluntary donations.

Donations have made it possible to recently renovate the music therapy room with the help of both paid workers and volunteers. The wooden floor and door are new, and the walls have been plastered and painted. And now there's a 'Sound-Lounger' for lying down in, across which strings are strung. The person lying down experiences deep and regenerative rest for quite a while when this is played.

A new building for the Ādaži Waldorf School

Latvia: the Waldorf school in Ādaži exists since 1991, with the school achieving the status of a UNESCO project school nine years later. Today, the school contains more even than classes one to twelve, with over 250 students – two years ago, the school decided to change to a double class system for each year, a result of big demand.

Meaning they started with two new class ones. But more classes mean more space is needed, and on top of this, the school now needs to leave the long used premises of a former state kindergarten. These premises had, until now, housed the Waldorf kindergarten belonging to the school and classes one to three. Now the municipal authorities need these premise because of local demographic developments. Fortunately, the school had bought land several years ago and had already constructed the first building, but now the main building must be erected as an urgent next step. This needs much preparation and help. The Friends of Waldorf Education were one of the financial supporters of this project.



The building work was finally finished in December 2015 and by joining forces together, the whole school community managed the move into the new environment. Walls were painted, furniture sawed and made, and mosaics set in the ground. The new building is light and warm inside, gifting the children a feeling of wellness and security. The whole school community celebrated the house-warming party in a colourful manner, fitting to this significant achievement.



Gamot Cogon School Qualifications now recognised in Iloilo

Philippines: The Gamot Cogon School is located on a wonderful plot of land, surrounded by rice fields, by a little river and grazing land for the cattle, and by ponds and bamboo trees. Its pictorial name is derived from these rural surrounds. Gamot means root or medicine, while Cogon is a type of grass, renowned for its substantial root system and its healing health benefits.

Since the Waldorf school was founded in 2005, new classes have been regularly added to it and the creation of an upper-school was started a few years ago.

Recently the school received the cheering news, that the Waldorf curriculum for the upper-school has now been recognised by the Ministry for Education, meaning that graduates of the school are now entitled to a degree course at university.

At present, the Philippines is one of the few countries in the world in which the full period of mandatory schooling only lasts ten years. This is due to be extended to twelve years. This is a new demand, which the Gamot Cogon School already fulfils through its upper-school Waldorf curriculum. Increasingly, the Philippine education system is dominated by private institutions, making it very difficult for poor families to facilitate a good education for their children. However, the Gamot Cogon School enrolls children from all social classes. This of course clearly affects the school budget, as more than a third of the children are not able to pay more than a fraction of the school fees. The school is supported through education sponsors and is looking to find new class sponsors.

Dear sponsors and school classes,

In most countries Waldorf schools do not receive any government funding and parents often cannot afford to pay school fees. With an educational sponsorship, you enable children from financially disadvantaged families to attend a Waldorf school. Your donation allows the respective school to admit children from different social backgrounds. You are free to specify the amount of your donation. The full tuition fee is usually between € 25 and € 200. As a sponsor you will receive a photo and a letter from your godchild on a semi-annual basis.

We would be delighted if you became a sponsor! Simply fill out the "Donate and Help" form and indicate the name of the child and the school. As each sponsorship represents a unique relationship and each sponsor has different expectations, I am looking forward to talking to you in advance.

Fabian Michel
Tel. + 49 (0) 30 617026 30
f.michel@freunde-waldorf.de

KENYA



Mbagathi Waldorf School in Nairobi
Esther (6) is a cheerful, talkative and extroverted girl. She likes going to kindergarten, where her favourite place to play is the doll's kitchen. She lives with her mother and her older brother in a simple, corrugated iron hut. Her mother earns a living for her small family through occasional jobs.

HUNGARY



Gödöllő Waldorf School
Soma (13) is a friendly and empathic student. For three years he has been learning guitar, which he plays skilfully and very beautifully. He is, moreover, a talented drawer. He organised several drawing competitions in the class last year, loves the beauty of nature and is a keen photographer.

GUATEMALA



Escuela Caracol School in San Marcos La Laguna
Michel (6) comes from the town adjoining San Marcos La Laguna. He is an open, bright boy, who very much enjoys laughing. Each day when he arrives at school, he greets his teachers with an embrace and a small kiss on the cheek. He is very inventive and loves singing and playing with friends.



Ujpest Regional Upper School in Budapest
Adél (15) lives with her parents and her sisters in modest circumstances. She attends class nine of Budapest's regional upper-school. In her free time, Adél gives full expression to her creative talents by drawing, singing and playing the trumpet. Animals are particularly close to her heart.

PHILIPPINES



Gamot Cogon School

Rimarks (9) has a difficult family situation. He still however takes part in discussions and movement games, with all his drive and energy. Particularly recently, he has become evidently more self-confident, follows his lessons attentively and shares his ideas and musings with his class.

SOUTH AFRICA



Hermanus Waldorf School

Masande (9) lives with his parents and his younger brother in Zwelihle. He is a boy who is hungry for knowledge. Masande always has a smart appearance, which is very important for his parents.

He particularly enjoys reading and drawing. In the afternoon he plays with friends, polishes his shoes and makes sandwiches for his mother, who often works nights.



Zenzeleni Waldorf School in Cape Town.

Siyavuya (10) lives with her mother and her grandmother in Khayelitsha. She is a kind and exuberant girl, who teachers often have to tell off in lessons, because she likes chatting to her friends. Above all, Siya – as her friends call her – loves joined-up writing and painting.



MEXICO

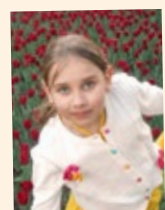


Escuela de la Ciudad de México

Aaron (10) has been at the Escuela de la Ciudad de Mexico since kindergarten and he loves the school. He is a very attentive, cheerful boy, and more than everything else loves to take part in the school's

various movement activities. In every free minute he gets, he plays football with his friends, who he's known for years.

RUSSIA



Raduga School in Voronezh

Nastja (10) enjoys going to school, because she's got lots of friends there. She's a hardworking student, interested in her lessons. Foreign languages, artistic and craft activities are all things she particularly enjoys.

As animals are close to her large heart, Nastja would like to become a vet one day.



Saint George School in Moscow

Wikentij (17) is a sensitive boy. He used to attend a state school, at which, however, he received little attention. Wikentij suffers from tetraplegia has weak eyesight and barely speaks. Since he started to attend

the Saint George School, he takes much more initiative in building up relationships, and always helps to calm his fellow students, when they burst into tears or get too loud.

PORTUGAL



Escola Livre do Algarve in Lagos

Jerome (10) is good at observing and learns practical things simply by watching. He is extremely dexterous and loves manual tasks. Jerome has a strong connection with nature and

looking after plants in the garden fills him with joy. For the future, Jerome wants to become an inventor.



A CLASS GETS A CHANCE TO INTRODUCE ITSELF:

The Special Class from the Nyeredzi City School in Zimbabwe

Without a doubt, this is one of the most unusual classes ever, uniting six different class age groups, welcoming and integrating 'visiting children', and with all regularity, losing children from its midst. Because the reality in this part of Africa is that the search for work and an adequate living for the family forces parents to often move houses.

Their class teacher, Gilbert Guvakuva or Mr. G. as he's lovingly called by his students is an artist holding together this bright throng of children from the most different social, geographical and cultural backgrounds possible. Children aged between 6 and 11 attend his classes, and recently these have included children categorised as having learning difficulties, who start to flower once they have change to the Nyeredzi School. During the lessons a visitor can experience much mutual attentiveness and helpfulness amongst the students.

The Nyeredzi Waldorf School Initial began as a cooperation between the 'Kufunda Learning Village' social project and the Nyeredzi Waldorf Kindergarten in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital. After the first few years, the shared class for years one to three was relocated into the nearby village of Kufunda, because most of the parents came from here, while the larger part remained as a 'city school' in Harare. For the school's families, the meagre yields that farming offers up are barely enough, meaning that many children live in very precarious circumstances. Each quarter-of-a-year, the parents have to decide anew whether or not their children can stay at the school. The minimum school fees payable, as at the state schools, is 25 US dollars per quarter – not enough to finance a school. At both school locations, the teachers and the children of the school have to improvise bravely, as there is not enough of many things – and principally, insufficient financial means to pay teachers' salaries.

Donate and Help

Yes! I would like to donate _____ €

once

monthly

Mi donación es para:

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

Address

Postal code (Country)

Phone, Fax number

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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Privacy Policy for Donors: Your privacy is important to us and we treat your data in a strictly confidential manner. In order to provide you with a tax receipt, we will save your address. Your contact details will not be disclosed to unauthorized third parties. In addition, we will inform you four times a year about our work with our "Rundbrief" and member newsletter. If you do not wish to receive information from us, please let us know. We forward donors data to our partner initiative, so they can thank you directly. Our partners are not authorized to release the information to third parties. You can object to the transfer of your data at any time.

> 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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