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Dear donors, dear members!

IPA is collecting information in a village in Cameroon. “How many people live in this village?” Answer: “A lot.” The village chief of Mulyezi in Malawi says: “This village has between 900 and 1,000 inhabitants. People from six villages come to fetch water from the new drinking fountain – altogether 706 persons.” A school director in Albania tells us the total number of students in his school. But when you ask him how many there are in each class and then add up the figures, you immediately realise that the two totals differ considerably.

Measuring effectiveness based on a jumble of figures?

Again and again we have to fight against a jumble of figures, false data and false information. They are the basis for choosing and planning new projects. Therefore, it is often extremely difficult to judge its effectiveness, which our donors have a right to be informed about. To achieve a solid basis of data, IPA has to invest a lot of time and energy. What in theory seems to be quite simple turns out to be a Herculean task in reality.



Nicole Delavy
Managing Director IPA

Region of Bwengu, North Malawi / Soazza, Switzerland

Child labour – an extremely complex problem

In the region of Bwengu in Malawi, IPA has taken a first step in the fight against widespread child labour. This pilot project will be followed by others.

In Malawi child labour is a real problem. Although there are local committees that fight against it, their members are insufficiently trained and they do not have the means to look into the many cases. Of course, fighting child labour was the main aim of the project, but IPA also wanted to gain experience for



Three of these six children were freed from exploitation

future approaches of the problem. The reasons for child labour are poverty, AIDS, unemployment, poor education and many other factors. “We have realised that you can not judge child labour as a unique phenomenon. In the long run we will have to fight child poverty”, IPA partner James Gondwe said shortly before the project was complet-

ed. So we had learnt an important lesson, but the project was going to have many other positive effects.

Young Swiss people without mobile phones

A group of youngsters and students in Zurich decided to make it their business to make this pilot project possible. Financed by the Lions Club Zimmerberg, they worked for



The daily hardships on the steep slopes

a week on the steep slopes above the village of Soazza (in the East of Switzerland) in temperatures like those in Malawi. They started work at 6.30 AM and had breakfast at 9.00 AM so that they could enjoy a siesta when the heat was at its peak. Mowing and



Sharon Blarer, the leader of the environmental work group, is waving from the hay wagon

making hay were the main tasks in order to protect the chestnut groves and the biodiversity of the region. Soazza is a village in a remote area, so one might think that it would have been important for the youngsters to spend their free time chatting with their friends at home. "It was cool that nobody used their mobile", a student reported from the camp. Obviously, there was no need, the group enjoyed playing games and having long discussions in the evenings. Their joint work and the project in Malawi quickly bonded them together – a pleasant side effect of the IPA concept "environmental work".

Not all problems solved

The young Swiss really managed to finance the pilot project. A theatre group then went from village to village in Bwengu. 56 theatre



Further training of the committee against child labour

performances helped to interest thousands of children and villagers in the topic. The local committee was thoroughly trained and introduced to its task. Thanks to new bicycles, its members can now carry out checks in distant places. So far 14 children have been freed from child labour and have returned to their families and to school. Many



A theatre performance in a school

other cases of domestic violence have been discovered and are being fought against. In certain regions child labour has diminished and important strategies for further and bigger projects have been worked out. One of the results of this pilot project is also the fact that not all the basic problems have been solved yet. A lot of work will still have to be done to improve the basic living condition of the people in the north of Malawi and so to eliminate the breeding ground for child labour.

Sukth i Ri, North Albania

Metamorphosis of a high school

Thanks to the support of IPA the high school in Sukth i Ri is going through a fundamental change. It is not completed yet, but some serious defects have already been removed.

Before their first visit the IPA representatives were sceptical. A school, not too far away from Durrës, in the region which is



An old classroom before the renovation

considered to be the economic centre of the country, and above all a high school – this could not possibly be so bad. But far from it! More than 270 students were sitting in a dilapidated building without any toilets. In some rooms the windows were bricked up so that the cold would not get unbearable. There was no heating, and water was running down from the roof and along the walls into the classrooms. In the school ranking of the region Sukth i Ri was in the 11th position out of 12. Who wanted to study there? And what would they learn? There were no teaching materials and without PCs, the les-



A completely new atmosphere after the renovation

sons in computer science were only theory. A serious preparation for university was impossible. „Those who go to school here can not afford to travel to Durrës every day,” the former headmaster of the high school said. And yet one could feel the commitment of the teachers which is a good precondition for a successful project.

Big steps towards 2nd position

Of course the enormous task had to be split up into several part-projects which would be completed over the course of several years. It was obvious that we had to begin with the main problems: the roof, the windows and the toilets. In a second phase we put the focus on the improvement of the lessons. This should be achieved through the renovation of the classrooms and by the purchase of teaching materials and computers. A course in web design would finally be offered as a highlight for particularly motivated students.

The results are astonishing. Sukth i Ri has



A biology lesson with teaching materials

now the highest number of applicants in the district and in the school ranking has reached 2nd position. The new headmistress said last autumn about her deputy director: „Anita has been here for eight years, but only for the last two years has she been working at a proper school.“ How it was before can not easily be described.“ And the deputy director adds: „Today we can hardly remember how we did our work in the past. At long last we can concentrate on the lessons without having to deal with other absurd problems.“ The list of enthusiastic comments was almost endlessly prolonged. It is particularly encouraging that the average



A course in web design

marks in the final A-level examinations have risen by 0.4 points. At the same time the project has stimulated the social awareness of the students: For the last two years they have organised small money collections to support poor families in the village before Christmas.

The transformation from a dilapidated school into a good school is not fully completed yet. There is still no infrastructure for sports and there are no special classrooms for teaching chemistry or physics. The next part-projects are due to start in summer 2018.

Lusangazi, North Malawi

IPA-UK 2017: Activities

Since having IPA-UK registered in November 2016, the fundraising activities have been very successful.

Chloe, a school girl from High Wycombe, who played the harp at the annual concert in High Wycombe in 2016, was moved by the



Chloe, a successful young fundraiser

lack of education for children in Malawi and decided to raise some funds by doing a sponsored 12 mile walk in the summer of 2017. Chloe managed to raise an amazing amount of £1,300 which went towards the TDC (Teacher's Development Centre) in Lusangazi. A TDC is a mixture of library and further education centre for teachers. The one in Lusangazi is to provide support for 120 teachers from 9 primary schools with a total of about 3,600 pupils. The centre consists of one very small room in a dilapidated school building, and there are neither textbooks nor learning materials available for its users. Thanks to Chloe's help and other donations the TDC in Lusangazi will be sup-



The TDC has no proper roof nor teaching materials

plied with textbooks for students and teachers as well as teaching materials. She handed a cheque to IPA-UK at the annual concert in High Wycombe.

France Ellul and his band Anwen with Annie and Tarsem organised the 10th concert in aid of IPA-UK in November 2017 at Christ the Servant King Church in High Wycombe. The concert was well attended by many people who come every year. The guest



The band Anwen in High Wycombe

musicians and performers, coffee, tea and cakes were enjoyed by all.

After 12 consecutive years at the Jasmine Restaurant, the annual IPA-UK lunch, organised by Diana Wallace, was held at the China Diner in Beaconsfield, as sadly the Jasmine had closed. Friends who attended the lunch for years filled the restaurant and the new venue was a great success. The annual presentation was made and a record amount of funds were raised.



Diana Wallace with helpers at the lunch

Future fundraising events in 2018

A Charity Golf Day at Chartridge Golf Club in Chesham is being organised by Dr. Steve Brown on the 11. May. If you are interested, please contact him directly by email at drstevebrown2@gmail.com. The annual concert and lunch will take place in November.

The Interview (part 2)

“A very serious organisation”

What are your impressions when you see students doing IPA project work?

They are really fantastic! They have moved me. It is most enjoyable when you speak with them about their project work. They are indeed fascinating people. Pietro Tomasini and Irene Wenger treat the youngsters like grown-ups. They remain in the background, but they lead them professionally and give them a lot of freedom. Here you can see how young people are eager to learn if you let them choose their own way. The students respect each other and carefully listen to the suggestions of the other members of the group. These are people who will one day give a lot to the world.

The students like the practical aspect of project work. Are the lessons at a state High school too theory-loaded?

Yes, they are. Learning should not so much be limited to sitting on a chair and to answering a question now and again. I admit that this is an exaggeration, but there should be more realistic situations. Naturally the basic skills are essential and besides the given conditions at a state High school are clearly defined, however the practical aspect which stimulates the potential of the students has not yet been fully exhausted.

In what way does a school benefit when teachers are also engaged in other jobs?

A school should be open and linked with society. Young people need role models who represent certain values. Experiences made in other fields such as culture, research and the economy are therefore valuable. It is good that people are different. Diversity is a big opportunity, this is also true for teachers.

Why would you like to keep up your cooperation with IPA once you are the headmaster of the Lyceum Alpinum in Zuoz?

I do not know the school so well yet, but “Community Service” and international cooperation already exist, and they are an important part of a school. They belong to my visions and to my strategy. A school should focus its self-understanding on what is happening in the world, to get involved, act and be effective. You should not only see yourself. IPA is a very serious organisation which does not want to benefit itself. In the new school we can build on this know-how and convince people to spend their money where it makes sense.



Christoph Wittmer, 53, lives with his wife in Stäfa and has two grown-up children. He was the headmaster of Enge high school and is president of the Museumsgesellschaft, the Literaturhaus and the Literaturmuseum Strauhof in Zurich. Since March 2018 he is headmaster of the Lyceum Alpinum in Zuoz.

Preview of forthcoming IPA projects

Mwaziko, North Malawi.

1,000 villagers and 200 schoolchildren need water every day. It comes from polluted pools and a small brook. The women and girls have to walk long distances along remote footpaths and are constantly at risk of being raped. Thanks to a secondary Swiss school class the building of a drinking well in the village will end this intolerable situation.



Goricë, South Albania.

The IPA junior team 2017/18 has decided to attend to the village school as well as the first aid station. The latter is supposed to provide medical help for 570 people, but there are no medicines, no diagnosis equipment, no water and no electricity.



Kamkhwala, North Malawi.

Hunger determines everyday life in this village. A project work class at the high school in Wohlen supports the farmers to realize a corn cultivation project, including irrigation and training courses. They will also build a storehouse and launch a programme to breed goats.



- Swiss organisation for development co-operation with a branch in Beaconsfield, UK. Bulletin of ZEWO and supported by DEZA (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation)
- Founded in 1994, since 2001 known and active under the name IPA (International Project Aid)
- Engaged in transitioning and developing countries with focus on learning and education
- IPA offers help for self-help, e.g. through projects in the fields of food production and water supply as well as the issuance of micro credits
- The aspect of the IPA brand is the integration of youth in the implementation of projects. Swiss students thus get the opportunity to gain formative experiences
- School classes and junior-teams define, plan and execute their projects independently but are supervised by experienced IPA staff
- All projects are inspected by IPA on location and, following completion, are controlled once more
- IPA has received the Profax prize in 2005, and in 2007 was named "Swiss Charity of the Year" by Man Investments

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