

September 2009

International Project Aid, Bederstrasse 97, 8002 Zürich, Phone +41 (0)44 381 20 24,
Fax +41 (0)44 381 20 25, email: info@project-aid.org, www.project-aid.org; for UK see p. 8



Reliant partners on site

Dear sponsors, dear members!

When he gets up at 6am in the morning, his whole body is aching. The night was cold and the mattress thin. He is 67 years old and his name is Ali Brahimi. Ali is the partner of IPA for the mountainous region of northern Albania. When renovation works are being carried out on school buildings or medical centres in spring or summer, he often spends the night at the building site, often sleeping on the floor, even at very low temperatures. This is the only way, he says, he can guarantee that the work of the artisans is not just of good but of the best quality.

IPA's success is based on the exceptional dedication of its local partners in Albania and Cameroon. They give sponsors the certainty that their money is being used with great care.

Let's hope that our organisation will be able to carry out many more projects with Ali Brahimi, for the development of this region.

Nicole Delavy, Managing Director
IPA

District Zina, Northern Cameroon Flying medics are the only hope

When someone falls ill in one of the villages of the Zina district they have hardly any chance to receive medical care locally.

Around 500,000 people find themselves in this unfortunate position. In this region, which is amongst the poorest in Cameroon, medical facilities can only be found in three villages – and in these the most elementary infrastructure is missing: there are no sanitary installations, no treatment facilities, no medicines. In addition, the medical centres are too far away or are inaccessible during the rainy season.



Empty shelves in the pharmacy...



...and dilapidated medical centres.

The "Arams" organisation approached IPA for help. Its objective was to support the villagers of this flood-prone region in

terms of health and education. Arams' doctors are from this region and know the problems of the local population. In order to offer medical care and health education, teams of doctors and nurses drove to five villages in the region. The project cost about CHF 27,400. Arams contributed CHF 9,700 to the costs in terms of labour, i.e. the medical staff worked without pay, paid for their own meals and contributed a significant amount of cash. The villages themselves contributed a value of around CHF 800. They provided the furniture



Consultation.



Education.



Big rush.

and water for the consultation room, for example, and offered lodgings for the medical staff. The major financial contribution of CHF 16,900 came from a private Swiss donor. **The campaign was a huge success:** Each village was visited by a medical team on two days, and a total of 2,671 people were treated, with drugs being dispensed free of charge, too. In addition, the doctors and nurses conducted a health education campaign, providing information on a wide range of prevalent illnesses and health risks. The people in the area suffer mainly from tape worm, malaria, bacterial dysentery and other illnesses caused by parasites. Women often suffer from abdominal illnesses. In addition, blindness and visual impairment are widespread.

The staff was literally swamped by patients. In order to control the rush, people first had to be calmed down and asked to form a line. “The need for medical care is huge”, IPA’s managing director Nicole Delavy observed once again. It can only be hoped that other (Swiss) sponsors can be found to continue this exemplary pilot project.

For further information, see [www.project-aid.org>projects>cameroon>health>realised](http://www.project-aid.org/projects/cameroon/health/realised)

Gjirokaštër, Southern Albania

Two warm meals a day

A project of the heart and of compassion: Since its inception IPA has been supporting the nursing home in Gjirokaštër – frequently fighting adverse circumstances and difficult financial situations.



Old people who are lucky in Albania are cared for by their relatives at home. The

unlucky ones end up in one of the nursing homes, lonely and neglected. In the whole of Albania, with its 3,2m inhabitants, there are only 5 old people's homes. By contrast, the city of Zurich, with a population of 380'000, boasts 25 such homes, not counting private nursing homes.

The nursing home of Gjirokaštër – with its 45,000 inhabitants being one of the main cities of Southern Albania – caters for the aged and physically or mentally handicapped. The co-existence of such different patients is not always easy; conflicts are a recurrent problem.



The number of residents varies greatly. Often the home is operating at capacity or very often even above. The main issue is that the budget is not sufficient. In 2008 the monthly budget for the entire home was about CHF 17,000. This had to cover the salaries of 21 employees and all other expenses - meals, electricity, water etc.



Visit on location: IPA managing director Pietro Tomasini and partner of IPA in Albania, Bujar Dudumi.

IPA has been lending its support to this home for many years. At the beginning the aim was to ensure that the residents would get two warm meals a day. The washing machine broke down

time and again, so IPA replaced it with a new one. Residents very often do not know what to do with their time. There are no social activities or planned outings. So, a studio for needle work was set up as a way of occupying them.



Junior-team member Migmar Dhakjel.

IPA buys food from repayments of micro credits for old and handicapped people.

A project for an old people's home is not easy to finance. The majority of donors don't want to invest in old people, as this is not seen as anything "sustainable". Moreover, this is a project without completion. IPA has solved this problem as follows: The organisation extends micro credits in Albania, which as such have no direct connection with the nursing home. With the repayments of these credits, however, IPA purchases food for the home. For two years some Zurich based nursing homes, such as the innovative "Sydefädeli", have supported the home in Albania. In Gjirokaštër the origins of IPA lie: in 1994 the "Solidaritätsgruppe Partner für Gjirokaštër" (solidarity group partner for Gjirokaštër) was founded, from which IPA emerged in 2001.



This might explain IPA's affinity for the nursing home there. Each spring and autumn IPA staff and junior-team members visit the home. But there is another, easier explanation for IPA's engagement. "It would be difficult to simply leave these old and handicapped people to their own destiny", as Pietro Tomasini, managing director of IPA, puts it.



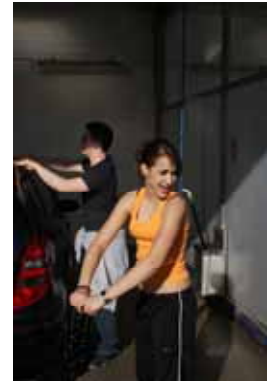
The new washing machine – a great help.

**District Zina, Northern Cameroon
Car Wash Campaign in Spreitenbach
for schools in Africa**

Grade S4a of the secondary school in Spreitenbach has planned and financed an equally ambitious project: to strengthen the parent associations of 26 schools in Northern Cameroon.

The schools of Northern Cameroon receive hardly any help from the government. There is great need for everything: class rooms, teaching staff, food and teaching materials. Education generally is in a dire state. In the district of

Zina the school enrolment rate is the lowest in the country. Zina consists of 26 villages and lies in the middle of the flood area of the river Logone. The region is very poor and underdeveloped, people live in little mud huts, and only in the main town, Zina, are there a few concrete buildings scattered around. On the other side of the river lies The Chad.



The parents of the children in Zina try desperately to help their local schools; only they do not know how to, they themselves have hardly had any education at all. While in practically every village, there is a parent association consisting of parents and teachers, their scope is severely limited



despite good intentions. The parents are happy to work for their schools, e.g. by erecting walls for new school buildings with mud bricks. Every now and then, they raise some funds to pay an untrained teacher or they decide to invest some of the proceeds from fishing into the school. All this, however, happens without any



concept - the parents have neither the know-how nor access to the necessary infrastructure.



This is where the project to strengthen the parent associations sets in; it is a “help for self-help” project in its classic form. The idea came from the schools themselves and from the school director responsible for Zina, whose dedication for the schools in the region is exemplary. The project is budgeted at CHF 18,500.



The “carwash activity” of the secondary school in Spreitenbach was the base for the financing of the parent association project. On the image is class S4a.

In Switzerland the students of grade S4a of the secondary school in Spreitenbach together with their teacher Aurelio Führer showed an interest in working with IPA. IPA had worked with the school from November 2007 to July 2008. It proposed five potential projects to the students (7 girls and 11 boys). The parent association project was the only “invisible one”; others included, for instance, the building of a new school. For two lessons a week IPA managing director, Pietro Tomasini, introduced the students to the most important aspects of development work and project management. They learned how to write a proposal and set up a budget and went off to plan various fund raising activities. The highlight was a two-

day car-wash campaign in Spreitenbach, which raised over CHF 1,400. The financial basis for the project was laid with the students writing letters to parents,



relatives and acquaintances asking for donations. In addition, two foundations contributed to the financing – one of them, “Snow Dreams for Africa”, donated CHF 10,000. On the basis of all this, the project was fully funded.

In Cameroon the actual realisation of the project was split into three phases. **Phase 1** consisted of a meeting with the 26 heads of school and 20 delegates from the parent associations. A detailed appraisal of the current situation took place in all 26 schools. Not only the parent associations were assessed but each entire school – ranging from infrastructure and enrolments to students and teachers. The aim was to analyse strengths and weaknesses. Based on this knowledge, multi-day workshops during **phase 2** were envisaged. The delegates of five parent associations would meet at a time to receive training in organising an association, setting up annual plans, establishing budgets and fund raising etc. In reality a slightly different path was chosen: the workshops were shorter but each parent association received individual training. This meant that not only a few representatives of an association but all associates, in total 734 persons, could be included. **The result is surprising:** The parent associations set themselves high targets and suddenly noticed what was possible once they were better organised. Between January and May 2009 alone a total of 15 new classrooms were built in the region (some of them even with a proper roof), and 36 new teachers were employed. Most importantly, the enrolment rate has risen.

The success rate varies from village to village. Some goals have not been met yet. 554 desk chairs were planned, for example, but so far only 23 have been



financed. But the project has only just started, and more results will be delivered over the next few years.

“Finally I’m getting recognition and respect in the village”, says a teacher from Ivié in Northern Cameroon.

Phase 3 finally deals with the evaluation of all results. All schools and parent associations have been revisited. The project provoked **positive reactions** both in Switzerland and in Cameroon. “It feels good to help poor people”, says one of the students involved, and another: “It’s a pity that it is already over”. It is interesting to observe that, while it was the boys who pushed this ambitious project, it was the girls who clearly showed more dedication in the end.



Workshops for the education of the parent associations.

Aboutkar Mahamat, the IPA partner on location in Cameroon, entitled his final report for the project: **“Simple ideas sometimes lead to spectacular results”**, and a teacher from the village of Ivié

summarised his frame of mind with the simple sentence: “Finally I’m getting recognition and respect in the village”.

Raffael Zwicky / What do you think of IPA?
The interview



Raffael Zwicky

Following an apprenticeship as an interior draughtsman, Raffael Zwicky, 24, will soon complete his architectural studies at the technical high school in

Zurich. During his apprenticeship he worked for IPA for two years as a member of the junior-team. Zwicky lives in Däniken in the canton of Solothurn.

“A charity with heart and soul and great dedication”



Mr Zwicky, how did you get involved in IPA?

Raffael Zwicky: I was doing an apprenticeship as an interior draughtsman when one of my friends, a Hottingen high school student, brought me along to an IPA information evening. I was immediately taken by the IPA concept. I then joined the junior-team and worked in it for two years; at the end of the first year I had the opportunity to visit Albania together with two other junior-team members and the managing director, Pietro Tomasini.

How was the experience of this journey?

I had seen pictures of projects in Albania before the trip. These pictures were now brought to life and real; I was confronted with poverty and deprivation but, on the other hand, I experienced very positively the direct impact the IPA projects had on people's lives. In addition, I learned how to develop projects with people locally, starting by formulating ideas, then budgeting and finally executing these projects.

Did you personally learn any lessons from working with IPA?

Yes, during the ten days in Albania I learned what it means to bring hope and how energy can be released within oneself and others. I remember the encounter with a teacher of a school that required renovation. She received us in quite a curt manner. The reason for her initial negative stance: before IPA arrived, a number of aid organisations had offered to help her school – but in the end had done nothing. Her gratitude to IPA was correspondingly high afterwards.

What do you think of IPA?

The people at IPA work with heart and soul and great dedication. This is the first thing one notices when one comes across IPA. At the time I was only 18 but at IPA I was taken seriously, which I valued highly. I would also like to mention the working atmosphere at IPA, which is very good.

Could you envisage working for an aid organisation again in the future?

Indeed, I could even imagine working for IPA again. First, however, I want to complete my architectural studies and then I will look for a job where I can gain some initial work experience.

Preview of IPA projects autumn/winter 2009

Louvoung, Northern Cameroon. There are schools but no school books. The project aims to purchase 300 textbooks covering the various subjects.

Shkopet, Northern Albania. Here classes are taking place; however, the building is in a dismal state. Project: partial renovation of the school.

Krinë/Tranoshiht, Southern Albania. The medical centre lacks even the most basic things. Project: procurement of diagnostic instruments, medicines and consumables.

Zina, Northern Cameroon. In this village of 5,000 inhabitants a group of motivated farmers want to produce **rice** and build a



fish farm (picture). A portion of the profit will then be invested in projects benefiting the entire village (repair of wells, teacher salaries etc.). Thus not only is hunger combatted in the region but the entire village benefits. The project of the cantonal high school in Obwalden could also be a role model for nature conservation, given that the existing river has been nearly depleted of its fish.



in a few words

- Swiss organisation for development cooperation with a branch in Beaconsfield, UK. Bulletin of ZEW0 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 exclusive 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

Would you like to support IPA?

You are very welcome as a member or a sponsor. We would love to tell you more about IPA and are looking forward to hearing from you by phone: 01494 67 48 30 or by email: dianawallacedtw@aol.com.

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