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Dear donors,
dear members!

20 years of conflict and warfare in Afghanistan. The US alone invested one billion dollars into the solution of this conflict. But only two weeks after the international troop withdrawal the Taliban were back in power. A lot of people tried to flee and women again lost their acquired rights. How was this possible?

Built on sand

There was simply no foundation. Superior military power cannot guarantee a positive (political) development. The medicine offered by the army did not fight against the illness, but only against its symptoms. And as soon as the medication was stopped, the fever returned. Lasting progress can only be achieved if a growing civilisation has a right to decide in vital matters and if its government focuses on the common good. But once more, quiet and supposed stability were considered to be more important than human rights, democracy and progress. The price on all sides is high, particularly for the people in Afghanistan. Development based on effective projects for the people, combined with military actions, might be a wise alternative in future.

N. Delavy

Nicole Delavy
Managing Director IPA

Mwasukwe, North Malawi / Zurich, Switzerland

The highlight of the week

For a long time we thought that there were simply too many problems waiting to be solved at the primary school in Mwasukwe – until a class at Enge high school in Zurich decided to step in.

Until recently the school was not permitted to teach students in their last two years because there were not enough classrooms.



On the way to school across the new bridge

But the building of new classrooms was only one of many problems. There were also plans to build a well, accommodation for teachers and to offer further education courses. Moreover, various teaching materials were urgently needed. Even a bridge across the river was budgeted because every year, during the three-month rain period, 40 children were unable to go to school because of the high water. "This is unacceptable", the young people at Enge high school said and raised their budget to 140,000 Swiss Francs. Next, they defined a priority list and a minimal amount of 48,000 Swiss Francs - still a respectable sum for a school class.

It was probably a mixture of consternation and ambition that spurred the leaders in the class, both during the planning phase and the fundraising period. New ideas popped up, for example the sale of incidentals by a



The sale of biscuits – one of various means of raising money

group of mothers in Mwasukwe. New contacts were established, new doors opened. "And there are people who complain about today's youth...", Marijan Markotic of the Three Kings Church summed up his experiences with a group of students. A foundation even responded to an application with



Letters – waiting to be posted

the following words: "Other NGOs could learn a thing or two from your work" – and supported the project. Such positive feed-

backs of course encouraged the youngsters. Melina Ammann said: "I always looked forward to Wednesday. The course was the highlight of the week." The course finally ended with a spontaneous applause from the students – a rare honour for a school subject.

Expansion of the primary school

It all began with the money that was collected after the services at Three Kings Church. Of course each new donation was welcomed enthusiastically and the students shared their excitement. In the end they had



The new school building in Mwasukwe

actually raised 140,000 Swiss Francs. "I would never have thought that we would be able to reach that goal", Nicole Mitterutzner said. She was clearly proud and relieved.

Meanwhile Mwasukwe has a new building with three classrooms and a small staffroom which are supplied with solar electricity. And now the school is entitled to offer courses for all eight grades. The students have their own coursebooks and a group of mothers run a small stationary shop where they can buy pencils and notebooks at fair prices. The profit is invested in new materials so that the students will be adequately supplied in the future. This idea, brought up by a student, is now being used in other projects. The well provides drinking water and the



Clean drinking water for the children

bridge makes it possible for all the children to attend school regularly. The building of the teachers' flats is still under construction. It is surprising – once again - what young people can achieve.

Luzni and Hotesh, North Albania / Zurich, Switzerland

Heartwarming gratitude

The two mountain villages in the hinterland of Peshkopi are difficult to access. But basic services in the fields of education and health are essential for the people who live there. The IPA juniors have made a valuable contribution to these sectors.

Nobody can say that there was not enough work to be done in connection with the Katund i Ri school in Luzni. Nevertheless, the junior team 2020/21 decided at a meeting to build a new first aid station in Hotesh



The renovated school with its sports field looks quite impressive

as well. Once again you might have thought that young people are sometimes overmotivated when they start a project. After all, the 9-year-school in Luzni needed a complete renovation, including new equipment and a computer room. The project budget was bigger than what most Swiss relief organisations invest in Albania in a whole year. In the neighboring village of Hotesh the first aid station was in complete decay and a basic medical service could no longer be



Thanks to new school materials learning is now fun

maintained. The nurse visited her patients on foot, equipped with a small suitcase. So

a new first aid station had to be built. Thanks to the prudent leadership of Nicole Delavy and the total commitment of the junior team both of these big projects became



Moved by the immense gratitude

reality. A local building firm realised them carefully and even in the capital of the district they were noticed and discussed.

But not everything went always according to the plan. On the side of the youngsters the Corona pandemic set limits to the cooperation and particularly to the fundraising possibilities. On the Albanian side the water connection for the first aid station caused problems which the local administration tried to solve themselves. But it was election time in



The basic medical services are now guaranteed

Albania and so the procedures were delayed – and of course the opening of the new first aid station as well. After all it also depended on the fulfillment of the sanitary standards.

Singing across Albania

The resulting pressure had its effect. Shortly before the members of the junior team set out to inspect their project, the local partner informed us that everything was ready. And so on October 12 a minibus with a group of Swiss students, all of them full of expectations, pulled up in front of the school in Luzni. The members of the junior team spent a long time inspecting all the ten part-projects

and visiting each school class. And their welcome was stunning. „Thank you!“ was written on blackboards and posters and an enormous gratitude was expressed with



The PC room: the new core of the school

flowers and speeches. And in Hotes? A happy nurse who has a safe workplace and who can in the long term help her patients with her knowledge and skills. For the Swiss students all this was a great compensation for their commitment. They were in high spirits during their whole stay in Albania. Not



The successful junior team in Luzni

surprisingly they spent their time on the bus singing pop and rock songs from times past. This journey will certainly be remembered for ever. And the Albanians in the region will undoubtedly remember the help they received from the Swiss juniors for a long time to come.

Kidam and Maskalaï, North Cameroon / Wohlen, Switzerland

Long-term effect on two sides

„Development work in Africa is like a rat race. You build a well and only a few years later it is in ruins again, the situation is as it was before.“ This is what a former student said who spoke about his experiences with a different NGO. Does it really have to be like that? Let us look

back on two projects which were realised by a class at Wohlen high school in the academic year 2008/2009.

The youngsters planned to build a well in the village of Maskalaï. They had a budget of Swiss Francs 22,400 but actually managed to raise Swiss Francs 57,700. So they could not only build the well, but were at the same time able to renovate a primary school



The administration team is responsible for the maintenance of the well in Maskalaï

in Kidam. „Please inform us about the well and the school“, IPA asked its partner organisation in Cameroon via e-mail. „The well and the village chief are both standards“, was the first answer. „The well is, even after twelve years, in immaculate condition and provides us with clean water.“ The administration and maintenance committee that was originally trained for the task



The school in Kidam after the renovation

still has a cash reserve of 1,150 Swiss Francs, an enormous amount for a poor village in the region. The maintenance is financed by the fees paid for the use of the well and by the yearly profit made by the local fishing industry. The clean water has already saved the lives of many people.

Similar in size and extremely pleasing is the long-term effect of the education programme in Kidam. The IPA partner reports:

„The buildings are still in excellent condition and the introduction of a secondary school is mainly the result of your project.“ At the moment Kidam sends most of the young



Learning by working on a real project

people of all the villages in the area to a secondary school. And here the success is also based on the attitude of the people who take the responsibility: the parents' and teachers' association is „very strict and dynamic“.

An ideal concept

It was a special class at that time in Wohlen. Pietro Tomasini was in charge and he has



Everybody unconditionally stood by the project

still good memories. „When I was told that the class had a bad reputation I could hardly believe it.“ Of course the lessons were part

of the timetable, but they were not really ordinary school lessons. It was the cooperation of a team working on a real project. Perhaps this was the secret that led to success. The IPA concept called for a mandatory working situation – without the traditional school structures and teaching strategies. For a motivated class that does not appreciate to be put under pressure this is ideal. „It was positive to make practical experiences and to get a real outcome, not simply pure theory“, said Michael Kuhn. „Above all it helped us to develop and improve our soft skills“, added Claudia Preisig. „During my university studies I also attended courses in development politics“, Chatrina Hain finally wrote. So the young people in Switzerland definitely profited from their work and they may all be proud of their success and of the long-term effect of the two projects.

The Interview (Part 2)

“Education is power”

How do you describe IPA to people in a village?

We usually present IPA as an international organisation based in Switzerland. It is not a charity, but a develop-minded, non-governmental organisation which supports village development initiatives. We also say that IPA aims to improve the lives of underprivileged communities in rural areas in various ways which have a wider impact on the population depending on the community needs. We also mention that IPA has a similar motto to that of DAMRA, which is building capacities of rural communities so that they may be able to implement their own development projects.

Is it difficult to cooperate as you have a different cultural background?

Yes, it is difficult indeed. Some of the things that make the cooperation difficult are practices, policies and laws that each partner organisation is associated with. But such problems can always be solved by frequent discussions between the two parties. IPA has always asked questions in order to understand some of the Malawi policies, for example why we have to be members of CONGOMA and NGO Board or why we have to register our projects with NCIC. All this is meant to develop a clear understanding of the practices, policies and laws that a partner organisation is based on, and in the end this will help to improve and enhance the cooperation.

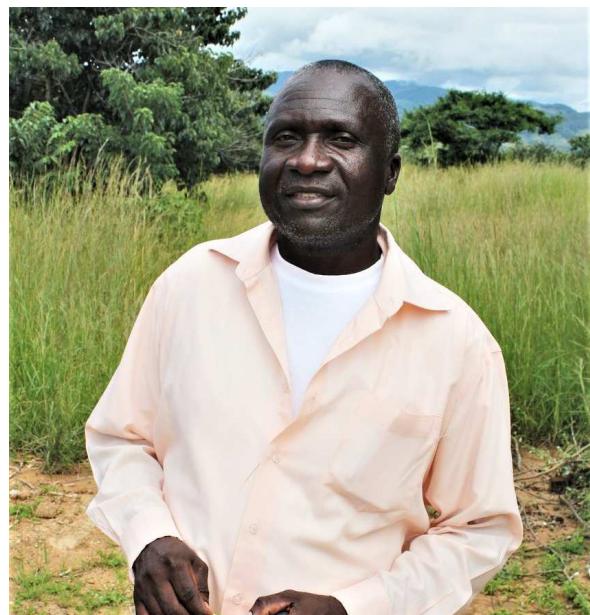
Do you sometimes feel that you are standing between the needs of people in Malawi and IPA?

Yes, sometimes I am really standing between the needs of the local population and the possibilities IPA has to help. This is really stressful. I also have to understand and accept that a development partner like IPA can not solve all community problems. Therefore I do not forward each request the community has raised to IPA. This some-

times is viewed by the community as if Flument was blocking the partner (IPA) from supporting us.

Which projects do you think have the best results and the strongest impact on your country?

Education projects. There are many schools all over the country and the government tries to meet the challenges found in these schools, but a lot of work still has to be done. Education is power. It is my belief that poverty could be reduced if most people were educated. With a good education one can succeed in all kinds of endeavours, be it small-scale farming, trading or manufacturing businesses. Therefore, projects aimed at improving quality education have proved to bring a real improvement of life for many people in our country. They must definitely be promoted.



Flument Mkinga, 58, is a father of six children and lives in Rumphi, Malawi. He was trained as a forester and obtained his degree in 1989. He became a founding member and managing director of Development Action for Marginalized Rural Areas (DAMRA) and has implemented successfully many projects with IPA since 2015.

Preview of forthcoming IPA projects

Wakaltou, North Cameroon.

Climate change, Boko Haram and Corona: these three factors increase the bitter poverty in the north of Cameroon. In Wakaltou 95% of the people live below the breadline and, to make things even worse, there was no rain period this year. A dramatic famine is threatening the country. A class at Enge high school in Zurich is planning to support the people with an extensive agricultural project.



Chatonda, North Malawi.

In the whole region comprising five villages and 2,500 inhabitants a well built by IPA is the only sign of infrastructure. There is neither a school nor a mill. There are no bridges and more wells providing water are urgently needed. At the MNG high school in Zurich a group of students are planning a multifunctional project which shall offer the region a safe development prospect.



- Swiss organisation for development co-operation
- Founded in 1994, since 2001 known and active under the name IPA (International Project Aid)
- Engaged in transitioning and developing countries with focus on education
- IPA also offers help for self-help, e.g. through projects in the fields of food production and water supply as well as the issuing of credits
- The aspect of the IPA brand is the integration of youth in the implementation of projects. Swiss students get the opportunity to gain formative experiences
- School classes and junior-teams select, 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 checked once more
- IPA has received the Profax prize in 2005, and in 2007 was named "Swiss Charity of the Year" by Man Investments
- International Project Aid-UK CIO (IPA-UK) registered with the Charities Commission, number 1170012, based in Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, is associated with International Project Aid (IPA), Switzerland
- IPA (Switzerland) provides the project evaluation, project management and on-site supervision for IPA-UK, employing local partners to ensure resources are delivered to where they are needed

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