



Ventao Partner Newsletter – No. 5

Welcome to the fifth issue of the ventao partner newsletter!

Our main topic for this newsletter will be the South-North component of the weltwaerts program. In 2013 the first 150 young people came to Germany for a volunteer experience. This year we are expecting 800 international volunteers, not the least because German civil society has lobbied for a more balanced volunteer exchange. We would like to introduce you to the framework conditions of the new component and give you further information with regard to your options for participation.

If you have any experiences or ideas you might want to share with us on this or any other topic, please feel free to do so.

With best regards from Berlin

Jan Wenzel, Nathalie Bambalinkenga and Anette Schwitzke

A short Introduction: ventao – Who we are and what we do

ventao is a German acronym and stands for “Association of weltwaerts Exchange Organizations in Development Cooperation”. As an association of currently 35 exchange organizations we have two main fields of action:

1. We are a so-called “quality association”, which means that we are an association for sending organizations, providing services and advice on all issues regarding volunteer services to our member organizations.
2. We are also a shared interest group representing the interests of our member organizations regarding the weltwaerts program towards the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and other political institutions like the German Parliament.

We currently have three staff members:

Jan Wenzel, the managing director with a full-time position, who is responsible for the overall administration of our association and for the political representation.

Anette Schwitzke, the quality management consultant works 35 h/week. She supports the members with regard to questions of quality management, organizes events and writes newsletters and manuals.

Nathalie Bambalinkenga has a mini-job and supports our accounting.

You can get in touch with us at info@ventao.org.

1. South-North – a new development in the weltwaerts program

Ever since weltwaerts started, there has been a strong interest on the part of German civil society organizations for working towards a more equal exchange with their partners. In 2013 the South-North Component of weltwaerts was introduced by the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), initially for a 3-year pilot phase. This new component enables young people age 18 to 28 to come to Germany for a volunteer service of 6 to 18 months. In the first year, we received 150 volunteers. In 2016 we will welcome up to 800 young people from all over the world.

Now many partner organizations that have previously hosted volunteers from Germany are becoming sending organizations themselves. This contributes significantly to the strengthening and expansion of the existing partnerships and to an equal exchange.

2. South-North – how does it work?

All sending organizations in partner countries must work together with an approved weltwaerts organization in Germany. Otherwise, it is not possible to send volunteers to Germany. As a rule, the German weltwaerts organizations in the South-North component cooperate with proven partners that have been hosting German volunteers in their projects for years.

The application for sending volunteers has to be submitted jointly with the partner organization from Germany. The application deadline for the hosting cycle 2016/17 was March 31, 2016. It is, however, still possible to **apply** for sending/hosting volunteers in 2017/18 **until September 30, 2016**.

Organizations that send weltwaerts volunteers to Germany are expected to:

- Do publicity work in order to increase awareness of the program, particularly among young people, with women and men being considered equally;
- Select applicants and prepare them for development volunteer service in Germany;
- Conduct a pedagogical preparatory and follow-up program and promote the dedication of returning volunteers;
- Support volunteers in various tasks such as applying for visas.

Usually the volunteers do not work directly in the host organization, but rather in other organizations that were sought by the host organization especially for volunteers. These consist of charity organizations, for example, in the social or cultural sector or in the area of environmental protection and conservation or sports.

It is possible for multiple sending organizations from one country or region to handle their responsibilities in cooperation. Less experienced organizations can be qualified by more experienced organizations, and parts of their tasks can be assigned to other sending

organizations, if necessary. If such cooperation options are not available to a sending organization, it is possible for them to transfer responsibilities that cannot be handled temporarily to the host organizations in Germany.

It is possible, for organizations from countries that temporarily are not able to receive German volunteers due to security reasons, to take part in the South-North component and send volunteers to Germany.

You may find the concept of the South-North Component under “Downloads”:

<http://www.weltwaerts.de/de/sued-nord-plaetze-anbieten.html>

Please note: Hosting volunteers from the South is not an easy task for the German partner organizations, as the costs involved are much higher than the costs for sending German volunteers abroad. As in the North-South Component, the involved civil society organizations have to contribute 25 % of the overall costs. How this contribution may be shared between the German hosting organizations, the Southern sending organizations and possibly the places of assignment and/or the volunteers is up to negotiations between the stakeholders involved. Financial arrangements and responsibilities do vary between organizations and should be discussed with your German partner organization.

3. South-North – current developments

Currently the South-North Component is undergoing an evaluation. All stakeholders, Southern and German partners, current and previous volunteers as well as some places of assignment have been interviewed. The results are expected in December 2016 and will be shared with the partners. In 2017 there will be a follow-up process with possibilities of partner involvement in the further development of the component.

4. South-North – how can I participate?

If you are interested in sending volunteers to Germany, the first step would be to talk to your German partner organization.

If your German partner is not able to offer you to host volunteers at this moment, he/she may forward your request to his/her respective quality association (in your case us, ventao). These associations can spread your request among their member organizations and help you finding a matching organization.

For a list of German weltwaerts organizations participating in the South-North Component have a look at <http://www.weltwaerts.de/de/aufnahmeorganisationen.html>

News

The Southern African weltwaerts Network (SAwN) gathers pace

Two years ago, during a partner conference in South Africa, the Southern African weltwaerts Network (SAwN) was founded. It has made progress and currently has 40 to 50 member organizations from South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana and Mozambique. At the last partner conference in April 2016 in Johannesburg SAwN presented a concept and laid out its goals:

- Networking and exchange of experiences among its members.
- Quality development in volunteer services, especially with regard to South-North
- Lobbying for volunteer services with their governments
- Participating in the development of the weltwaerts program at the program level

A SAwN delegation will come to Germany in June this year to discuss with representatives of the government and civil society the way ahead for future cooperation and support.

The program steering committee is interested in further information about partner networks and networking initiatives around the weltwaerts program and volunteering in general. The steering committee has sent a questionnaire to the partners and is collecting information about other networks. The results will be discussed in the next meeting of the steering committee in June 2016.

North-South partner conference took place in Berlin

In May 2016 more than 26 partner organizations came to Berlin for a conference organized by the German civil society organization ICJA.

Participants exchanged experiences with the South-North Component and had the chance to give their qualitative feedback on the program, and develop recommendations. These recommendations are forwarded to the Program Steering Committee (PSA), which will consider them for the evaluation and further development of the South-North Component. Our managing director Jan Wenzel participated in that conference. Let us know if you have further questions.