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Schweizerischer  
Verband für personelle  
Entwicklungs-  
zusammenarbeit

Swiss association for  
the exchange of  
personnel in development  
cooperation

Plate-forme suisse pour  
l'échange de personnes  
dans la coopération  
internationale

Plataforma Suiza para el  
intercambio de personas  
en la cooperación  
internacional

Forum Svizzero per lo  
scambio di persone  
nella cooperazione  
internazionale

Plataforma Suíça para o  
intercâmbio de pessoas  
na cooperação  
internacional

# PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION

## Development with a human face!

### **Development through encounter**

Personnel Development Co-operation is a form of Development Co-operation in which neither money nor technology are foremost, but rather the fruitful encounter between individuals of different cultures. They work together to improve living conditions in different countries in the South.

Personnel development co-operation is open to Swiss professionals for voluntary assignments of two to five years' duration.

This grass-roots co-operation between human beings from the North and South produces a rich exchange of knowledge and abilities, as well as favouring efficient and sustainable development. The appointment of qualified people to development programmes of local counterpart institutions is determined on the basis of concrete local needs and in an equitable manner between the organisations in the South and North.

In addition to the North- South projects, personnel development co-operation also supports South-North and South-South dialogue and interchanges. In this way, not only are development activities in the South supported, but additional benefits are also produced in societies in the North. Personnel development co-operation helps inform public opinion and political bodies in the North and South and promotes a greater understanding between cultures.

Personnel Development Co-operation consists of a dialogue of counterparts, between cultures, institutions and human beings. New issues and foci frequently arise from this co-operation which in turn benefit other forms of development co-operation as well as the political work with countries in the South.

The counterpart organisations in the North and South, as well as the Swiss professionals in the field, represent a concrete and everyday expression of International Co-operation. In the countries in the South, the appointed co-operants become appreciated ambassadors of Swiss solidarity.

### **Development through interchange**

Projects involving the interchange of people are long-term ones, and thereby provide a reliable and lasting accompaniment for the Southern counterpart. Great consideration is given to the efficient and effective use of available resources in order to improve living conditions in a sustainable manner. The aim is to develop institutional autonomy in the Southern counterpart organisations (capacity development). Personnel development co-operation supports and strengthens committed grass roots organisations and local structures (institution building). Participation and organisation is also promoted in the fight against injustice, violence and poverty (empowerment). Projects in personnel development

co-operation aim to underpin and provide a solid support to counterparts in violent and repressive situations (advocacy). Moreover, they are examples of the use of non-violence in the face of repressive strategies of conflict resolution (peace building).

## **Professionals involved in intercultural dialogue**

The professionals involved in personnel development co-operation work under a voluntary status with an income that affords them a modest life-style appropriate to their work context. They provide solid, professional skills, as well as social, political and inter-cultural skills that complement and reinforce each other during their assignment.

After their return, they contribute to public awareness-raising in the context of the North-South debate: providing talks to schools, making contact with the media or by being active participants in the public relations work of their organisation. Their inter-cultural skills and project experience comprise human resources that are much in demand in the education and social sectors, and are also highly sought by international companies.

## **Unité**

Unité, the Swiss Association for the Exchange of Personnel in Development Co-operation, is an association that has as its principal goal to favour and to create solidarity links and interchanges with the disadvantaged peoples in the South. It represents 25 Swiss organisations with a broad background of technological, socio-political, religious and humanitarian interests, specialised in Personnel Development Co-operation, that work closely with local organisations in the South, which can be governmental, non-governmental, church or grass-roots organisations.

Unité provides services in the development and consolidation of national and international networks, institutional support to its members and in the monitoring of the quality of, and the development of strategies in, Personnel Development Co-operation.

Unité and its member organisations are supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC) within the framework of its support programme for personnel development co-operation between the North and South. This programme is currently financing activities in some 40 countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and Oceania. The programme's main focus is in the fields of health, social sector, agriculture, and training in institutional and small and medium size enterprise (SME) development.

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*Unité does not offer assignments. To check out assignment possibilities contact the member organisations directly. For more information see: [www.unite-ch.org](http://www.unite-ch.org)*

**« Personnel development co-operation makes its contribution to the principal mission of development co-operation, which is the fight against poverty in the South. However, it also makes its « development contribution » to us here in the North.»**

*Ambassador Walter Fust, Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation SDC*

***Development with a human face is a bridge to the future!***