

# akzente

The GIZ Magazine

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**Agenda 2030** – a compass  
even in times of crisis

**Other topics:**

Diplomacy revisited in Montreal

A passion to teach in Afghanistan



**WE HAVE SOLVED  
OUR REFUSE PROBLEM.**

**PREMRUADEE CHARMPHONOD**  
FORMER MAYOR IN THAILAND

The Thai city of Phitsanulok has several recycling centres and a well organised waste disposal site. They are the legacy of Charmpoonod, who declared war on waste during her time as mayor. Charmpoonod's project became a blueprint for the entire country. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, GIZ provided her with support.

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# A COMPASS FOR DEVELOPMENT – AGENDA 2030

Why holding onto the Sustainable Development Goals is worthwhile – even in times of crisis

DEAR READERS, In 1990, 47 per cent of people in developing countries were living in extreme poverty, in other words on less than USD 1.25 per day. Today, the figure quoted by the United Nations is down to 14 per cent. The number of children dying before their sixth birthday has more than halved in the same period, falling from 12.7 million to six million. The use of renewable energy has tripled in that time. These are positive trends – even if not all countries have developed at the same positive rate.

MUCH OF THIS has its origins in the United Nations' Millennium Goals. Adopted in September 2000 by the General Assembly, the goals included halving the number of people living in extreme poverty and combating hunger. And yet there is still a tendency to view the current state of the world in a critical light.

GERMAN ECONOMIST Max Roser, a lecturer at Oxford, talks of distorted perceptions and offers an explanation: people tend to overstate the negatives. We interviewed him for this issue. Based on the long data series he analysed, Roser concludes that most people are better off today than in the past. But the number of armed conflicts is on the increase, almost tripling between 2007 and 2014 – this must, and should, give cause for alarm. Conflicts not only hurt people in the short term, they also damage a country's development in the long term.

PRECISELY FOR THAT REASON, it is vital to have a compass to point the way forward, even in times of crisis. For Dagmar Dehmer, an editor for the politics section of Berlin newspaper Tagesspiegel, this means the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the topic of our In Focus section in this issue of akzente. In September 2015, 193 nations made a commitment to pursue sustainable economic growth that will increase prosperity without destroying the environment. They agreed on 17 goals to improve living conditions on our planet over the next 15 years – with a scope that encompasses making cities more resilient, promoting equality for women and strengthening state institutions, among other aims. Dagmar Dehmer's conclusion: in these unstable times, the 2030 Agenda is more than just fine words.

THE SAME IS TRUE of GIZ's work. Our articles about a young vocational school teacher in Afghanistan, cashew cultivation in Ghana and a reconciliation project in Colombia show how we too are guided by the Agenda 2030 goals.



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## IN BRIEF

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### 6 Updates

Strong towns in Ukraine, protecting the environment with the Green Climate Fund, new projects in Albania and Latin America

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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### 10 Diplomacy revisited

In today's globalised world, diplomacy is updating its approaches – for example at the Global Diplomacy Lab in Montreal.

- 
- 3 Editorial
  - 30 Through the lens
  - 48 Info: Events and publications
  - 51 Sustainability, preview



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## IN FOCUS

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### 16 Agenda 2030: A compass – even in times of crisis

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are intended to give every person a life in dignity without putting pressure on the planet.

### 25 'We overstate the negative'

Our interview with Oxford economist Max Roser shows how living conditions are improving.

### 26 Infographics: Some progress – but more work ahead

Where the world has moved forward – or stood still.

### 29 'Stop saying nothing has changed!'

Amel Karboul from Tunisia challenges critics to recognise the progress her country has made.

## BACKGROUND

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### 32 A partner for businesses

Susanne Wolfgarten explains what the Agenda 2030 has to do with the goals of the private sector. She is responsible at GIZ for cooperation with companies and foundations.

## COMMITMENT



### 34 A passion to teach

Educational reform in Afghanistan is promoting vocational schools and producing well-trained teachers like Haroon Halimi.

### 40 Solution in a nutshell

In Ghana, the cultivation and processing of cashew nuts has raised profits for farmers and generated new jobs.

### 44 Making a fresh start

Supporting people displaced by violence remains one of the most pressing tasks in Colombia.

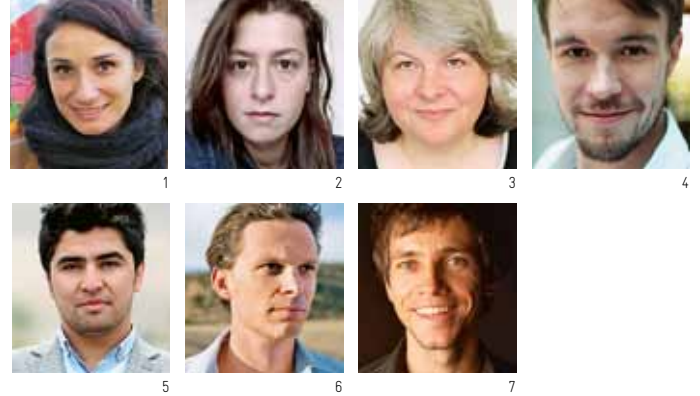
## INTRODUCTION



### 50 Natalija el Hage

GIZ's Country Director in Zambia takes unexpected situations in her stride as part of her job.

## AUTHORS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS



**MANUELA IMRE (1)** spoke to participants of the Global Diplomacy Lab in Montreal about this initiative on new approaches to diplomacy. Photographer **ADRIENNE SURPRENANT (2)** accompanied her. **DAGMAR DEHMER (3)** is an editor for the politics section of Berlin newspaper Tagesspiegel. In her article, she assesses the potential and limitations of the 2030 Agenda. Author **MARIAN BREHMER (4)** and photographer **MUSTAFA NAJAFIZADA (5)** draw portraits of enthusiastic teachers and highly motivated young people in Afghanistan. **PHILIPP HEDEMANN (6)** describes the impressive impacts that cashew nuts are having on many farmers' lives in Ghana. In Colombia, **THOMAS WAGNER (7)** met displaced people who are building new lives in this country scarred by decades of conflict.

## giz AT A GLANCE

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH offers sustainable and effective solutions for political, economic and social change processes. GIZ is a federal enterprise that employs more than 17,000 staff members and operates in over 130 countries worldwide.

[www.giz.de/en](http://www.giz.de/en)

## IN FIGURES

30%

of all women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence in a relationship, making these forms of violence some of the most widespread human rights violations. In addition to the impact on victims themselves, such violence also results in costs for health systems and economic losses as, for example, victims are unable to work for a period of time.

80

trillion passenger kilometres are expected to be accounted for by global passenger transportation in 2030. That is around 50% more than today. Since transport is already responsible for over one fifth of all greenhouse gases, sustainable solutions are especially important in the mobility sector.

42

is the average number of primary school pupils to one teacher in sub-Saharan Africa. By comparison, the average number in Europe and Central Asia is just 15. The teacher-pupil ratio is one of the indicators used to measure the quality of schools and education.



## Natural fibres for cars

**SUSTAINABLE CULTIVATION** More than half a century ago, Henry Ford unveiled a car body containing hemp. Unfortunately, his 'Hemp Car' did not take off. The BMW Group now uses a similar natural material in series production. In the BMW i3 electric car, fibres from the kenaf plant are visible for the first time in the interior trim of all doors and the dashboard, covered only by a thin plastic film. Kenaf, a member of the mallow family, is traditionally grown in Bangladesh, where its fibres are used to make rope, carpets, bags, padding and insulation mats. Kenaf is an interesting material for the automobile industry as it is lighter than plastic and extremely safe: when components made of kenaf break, there are no sharp edges. BMW also uses natural fibres in other models due to these properties, but they are covered in leather or plastic. Only the very fine and neat kenaf fibres can be used in visible places – as in the i3.

To ensure kenaf is cultivated sustainably, the BMW Group and its supplier Dräxlmaier have joined forces with GIZ International Services to launch a project in Bangladesh. Since 2015, GIZ has trained almost 1,000 small-scale farmers in Bangladesh, with the aim of enabling them to produce larger quantities of high-quality kenaf and thus generate more income. The training focused not only on the correct handling of seeds, pest control, and drying and storing fibres, but also on bookkeeping and occupational safety. All participants in the production process took part in workshops on sustainability and traceability. The entire programme is based on the standards of the Rainforest Alliance, an international environmental protection organisation. The project has also been a success for the BMW Group and Dräxlmaier: thanks to kenaf, the BMW i3 is a beacon of sustainability with regard to both its drive technology and the materials used.

[www.bmwgroup.com/en/responsibility/supply-chain-management.html](http://www.bmwgroup.com/en/responsibility/supply-chain-management.html)  
GIZ contact: Anja Meinecke, [anja.meinecke@giz.de](mailto:anja.meinecke@giz.de)

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FOR US EUROPEANS, AFRICA AS  
A NEIGHBOURING CONTINENT IS OF  
PRIME IMPORTANCE. THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES IS IN OUR VERY  
OWN VESTED INTEREST.

Federal Chancellor ANGELA MERKEL at a press conference in Berlin  
in November 2016

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## Climate fund



**GLOBAL COMMITMENT** GIZ has been accredited by the Green Climate Fund, meaning it can now apply for financing from the fund for projects with a total volume of up to USD 250 million. 'GIZ's accreditation is recognition of the experience we have gathered over many years around the world in our work on climate change mitigation,' said Tanja Gönner, Chair of GIZ's Management Board. The Green Climate Fund was established by the 194 countries attending the 2010 UN Climate Change Conference in Cancún,

Mexico. It provides funding for climate projects in developing countries. The main aims are to reduce emissions and help people in affected countries adapt to the impacts of climate change. The German Government is one of the biggest contributors to the Fund and is represented on its Board. GIZ will now submit proposals for suitable projects in, for instance, Asia, Latin America and Africa.

[www.greenclimate.fund](http://www.greenclimate.fund)  
[www.giz.de/climate](http://www.giz.de/climate)

## THREE QUESTIONS FOR



TARIK AZIZI

Director of Solaire Marocain, a Moroccan company that sells parts for solar systems and advises their users. He is supported by the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM).

**You lived in Germany for more than seven years. When did you decide to return to Morocco?**

I knew when I was studying for my Master's degree in Wismar that I wanted to return to Morocco. That's why I started contacting Moroccan firms while I was still studying. I built up a network.

**What are the biggest challenges you face in your job?**

My company is in the development and growth phase. Moroccan customers still need a lot of convincing when it comes to renewable energy. I sell German products and try to convince customers by focusing on quality and sustainability.

**What role does CIM play for you?**

People like me who are familiar with two countries can serve as a bridge. When German entrepreneurs come to Morocco, CIM often contacts me so that I can share my knowledge with them. In return, I receive support for further training in solar technology and for trips with Moroccan companies to specialist trade fairs in Germany.

# Jobs for refugees

**CASH FOR WORK** Many Syrian war refugees have found shelter in neighbouring countries. There, they often see no prospects for earning a living themselves. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) created around 58,000 temporary jobs (cash for work) for refugees in 2016. GIZ organised 39,000 of these jobs in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey on behalf of BMZ.

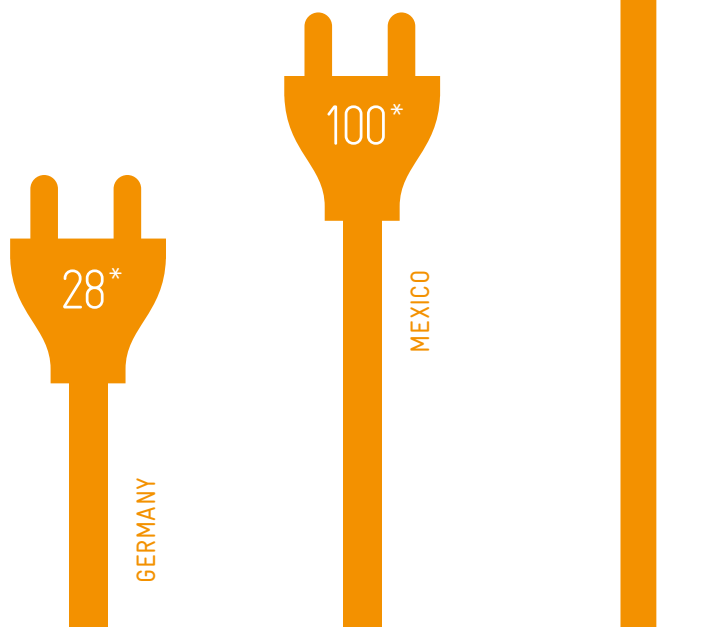
The refugees work in a variety of fields, including teaching, construction and street cleaning. They renovate schools, build roads and sort rubbish in refugee camps. In return, they receive a daily wage of 20 to 30 euros. This has provided a source of income for around 194,000 family members. The local community also benefits, which, in turn, defuses tensions.



# Time is money

**IN COMPARISON** Almost all companies need electricity. In a survey conducted by the World Bank, business owners from 139 countries cited poor electricity supply as the third biggest obstacle to business success. The three examples show how long entrepreneurs in various countries have to wait to obtain a new electricity connection.

\*Number of days for a warehouse to get electricity



# Well networked

**NEW ROAD** The area around the town of Gamba on the coast of Gabon in West Africa offers a unique biodiversity that is protected by a national park. For the town's population of approximately 13,000, however, this used to mean that they were cut off from the country's road network. Goods could only be transported to and from Gamba by plane, which is expensive, or by boat, which is a lengthy process. This drove up the price of fish and food grown in the region. Gamba now has a modern road, financed by the Government of Gabon and the local subsidiary of oil giant Shell. On their behalf, GIZ International Services oversaw the planning process and advised local construction companies on issues such as logistics, occupational safety and financial management during the entire construction phase. Thanks to the road, the cost of transporting goods has fallen by as much as 50%, and average prices have decreased by almost 20%. The road's construction and route respects nature conservation and the boundaries of the national park. Many residents have also received new houses with solar systems in compensation for the homes they gave up.

Source: Doing Business 2017, World Bank



# Citizen-oriented administration

**STRONG TOWNS** Most people in Ukraine live in small towns or in rural areas. Yet many of the political decisions that affect them are made in the country's capital, Kiev. Ukraine is currently working on decentralising decisions and services for citizens.

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, GIZ and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) are designing projects for regional self-government. In the regions of Chernivtsi and Poltava, for example, they are implementing the best ideas from a competition for better services. Throughout the country, administrative staff are receiving training on citizen-oriented working methods. Plans are also afoot to enable citizens to submit applications online in future. The project is financed chiefly by the European Union, with support from Poland, Denmark and Sweden.

## UKRAINE WIKI

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE UKRAINIAN /  
CAPITAL KIEV / FORM OF GOVERNMENT  
SEMI-PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLIC / HEAD OF  
STATE PRESIDENT PETRO POROSHENKO /  
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT PRIME MINISTER  
VOLODYMYR GROYSMAN / SIZE 603,700  
KM<sup>2</sup> / POPULATION 45.6 MILLION /  
POPULATION DENSITY 77 INHABITANTS  
PER KM<sup>2</sup> [1] / GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT  
USD 90.6 BILLION [2] / CURRENCY  
UKRAINIAN HRYVNIA

Sources: [1] UN Data 2016 [2] World Bank 2015

## NEW PROJECTS



### Young skilled workers

**GERMANY/MOROCCO** In Germany, trainees for hotels and restaurants are in short supply, while in Morocco, many young people cannot find jobs. On behalf of the Moroccan Employment Agency and the World Bank, GIZ is helping 100 young people to find training opportunities in the hospitality sector in Germany. It selects applicants and finds businesses and mentors. It also advises the Moroccan Employment Agency on legal migration channels and other occupations where skilled workers are lacking. The Agency can then improve the range of information it provides.



### New information point

**ALBANIA** The German Information Point for Migration, Vocational Training and Career (DIMAK) in the Albanian capital of Tirana plugs an information gap. Staff there provide advice on employment opportunities in Albania and conditions for legal migration to Germany. They organise job fairs and application training, and also train staff at the Albanian Employment Agency. Similar information points have already been set up in Kosovo and Serbia on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.



### Clean cities

**LATIN AMERICA** Many cities in Latin America have high levels of air pollution and congested roads. The European Union has now commissioned GIZ International Services to organise an exchange of experience between various cities in the region. This will also draw on the findings of European urban development programmes. The project, which is scheduled to run until the end of 2019, is based in Brazil. Key issues are the use of renewable energy, transport planning and sustainable urban development.



# Diplomacy revisited

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Creative minds and prominent leaders from around the world gathered in Montreal with a common goal: to help shape the future of global communication.

TEXT MANUELA IMRE PHOTOS ADRIENNE SURPRENANT

**P**aula Suárez-Buitrón looks a little worried. ‘I imagine it’s going to be very emotional.’ She eventually pulls the oversized virtual reality glasses over her head, adjusts them and takes a deep breath. The interactive film she is about to see, which is just under four minutes long, describes the situation of people in refugee camps around the world in ultra-realistic 3D. Every now and then, the 40-year-old economist moves her hands, shakes her head or nods – and smiles as she takes off the glasses. ‘It’s very powerful,’ she says.

This is exactly the type of experience of new technologies Suárez-Buitrón, who was born in Ecuador and now lives in Washington, had hoped for at the fifth Global Diplomacy Lab, which took place in Montreal, Canada, in November 2016. The Lab is a platform that brings together diplomats, politicians, representatives of non-governmental organisations, entrepreneurs and creative professionals on a regular basis in various locations. Together they consider new approaches to diplomacy. The initiative was launched by the German Federal Foreign Office in 2014 in partnership with the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, Stiftung Mercator and GIZ.

### From Afghanistan to Uganda: international participants

The theme of the event in Montreal is ‘Decoding Global Diplomacy: Balancing Power through Information Technology.’ Suárez-Buitrón is interested in a number of aspects of this: ‘I’m looking for ways to use modern technology to tackle problems and crises – or to make them more tangible.’ She is hoping to find answers to questions such as: ‘Can technology help us understand the world better? And where do the boundaries lie?’

“  
I’m looking for  
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modern technology  
to tackle problems  
and crises.  
”

It is day two of the meeting and, all around Suárez-Buitrón, the room is a hive of activity. The 35 participants from almost as many countries worldwide – from Afghanistan to Uganda – are huddled in small groups in the foyer of the Société des Arts Technologiques, an organisation committed to the development of new technologies such as virtual reality. The high-ceilinged, grey concrete room is bathed in a warm light thanks to its colourful light installations and impressive windows. Subtle lounge music is piped through the loudspeakers.

### Prominent experts and lively discussions

Today’s topics include ‘digital diplomacy as a new tool’ and ‘the crossroads of the digital economy.’ Suárez-Buitrón surveys the room: ‘I’m no expert in either of these fields.’ She does, however, bring other skills to the table: until 2009, she was the undersecretary to the minister of economic affairs in Ecuador, whom she advised on financial, environmental and energy issues. Today, she works as a programme director at the President’s Office in the World Bank. Her team develops strategies to facilitate the fast and effective implementation of the World Bank’s objectives. A mother of two daughters, she has also lived in France and Germany.

Suárez-Buitrón is in Montreal as a member of GIZ’s Global Leadership Academy network. This platform, which is financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, brings together prominent leaders from the fields of politics, business, academia and civil society. They discuss innovative working methods and share their experiences as decision-makers. ‘I often turn to this network for inspiration,’ says Suárez-Buitrón. For example, when she has become bogged down in a topic at work and needs a »



**Left:** Open atmosphere: participants and organisers take part in discussions.

**Right:** Intense debate: Paula Suárez-Buitrón asks critical questions (top). Two participants prepare a workshop (bottom).

AT A GLANCE

## LAB FOR FUTURE IDEAS



Diplomacy is generally the purview of governments. However, in today's globalised world diplomacy means taking into account a wide range of international organisations, groups and interests. New possibilities for communication such as digital technologies can be helpful in this respect. Against this backdrop, the Global Diplomacy Lab has been bringing together prominent leaders from various fields to test new forms of diplomacy twice a year since 2014. The Lab was initiated by the German Federal Foreign Office, which works in partnership with the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, Stiftung Mercator and GIZ.

fresh, external perspective to take the crucial step forward.

### The role of social media in the run-up to elections

In Montreal, she encounters a similarly diverse group of experts and is looking forward to expanding her network further still. A quarter of an hour later, she gets her first opportunity to do so during a panel discussion. She has many questions for the experts on the stage from the fields of politics, diplomacy and technology. How can you prevent the misuse of social media such as Twitter in the run-up to elections? How can you ensure everyone has equal access to the internet? A lively discussion ensues.

'The United Nations and countries such as the USA have been demanding recognition of internet access as a human right for some time,' says one participant. Daniel Domscheit-Berg, former spokesperson for the whistleblower platform WikiLeaks, agrees. 'But the question is how to develop an infrastructure that enables free access for all. Many countries and governments are not willing to relinquish control of regulation.' Domscheit-Berg, a

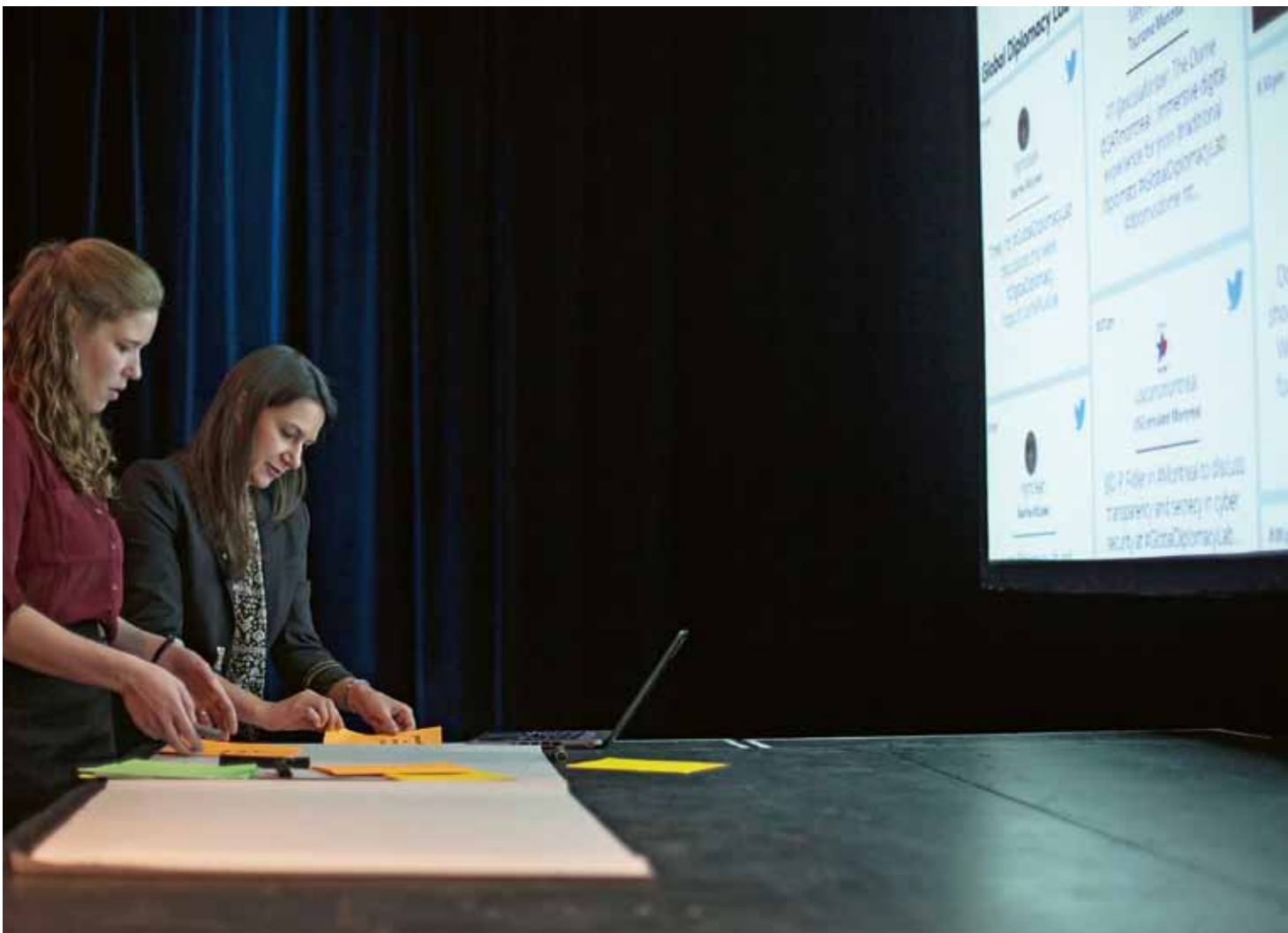
computer scientist and activist for freedom of information and transparency, is a speaker at the conference.

The participants have been carefully selected. If there is one thing Senta Höfer from the German Federal Foreign Office, who co-organised the conference, hopes to achieve from the meeting, it is for participants to engage in 'lateral thinking'. For this to happen, however, she believes that 'not only decision-makers' should be allowed a seat at the table. 'You have to bring together creative professionals from a wide variety of areas.'

GIZ's Global Leadership Academy, the most recent of the Global Diplomacy Lab's five partners, also contributes to this. The cooperation is beneficial to both sides, explains Wiebke Koenig, Head of the Academy. 'We share our networks and, in return, receive fresh impetus. And we jointly test different formats.'

### Immersion in new technologies

This is exactly what participants are asked to do on day three in the 'Situation Room': the task is to develop a strategy for the creation of a digital diplomatic embassy.





Also available on the akzente app and on the website: video impressions of the Global Diplomacy Lab. [akzente.giz.de/en](http://akzente.giz.de/en)

**Top:** On an equal footing: internet activist Daniel Domscheit-Berg (centre, back) talks to participants at the Global Diplomacy Lab.

**Bottom:** In the domed 'Satosphère' room, viewers can immerse themselves in films and games thanks to 360 degree projection.



Attentive listener: János Kóka used to be a government minister in Hungary and is now an entrepreneur. One thing that hasn't changed is his zest for good solutions.



At round tables, participants design, discuss and elaborate. And most important of all: the result will not be confined to a filing cabinet; the final concept will be sent to Global Affairs Canada, the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs.

During a 'digital break' between two events, Paula Suárez-Buitrón lies on a grey cushion, mesmerised by a futuristic short film. She is in the 'Satosphère', a high, domed room with a 360-degree cinema screen. The screen draws viewers into the images, allowing them to immerse themselves in films or games.

### New opportunities for artificial intelligence

'You feel like you're right in the thick of it. This technology could also be used for communication with crisis areas,' Suárez-Buitrón says to her neighbour János Kóka. He points out that, 'Just because a technology works in the entertainment industry doesn't mean it can be used in exactly the same way in a political context.' This leads to a discussion about how the new technology could be used in each of their respective fields.

Kóka, a former Hungarian Minister of Economy and Transport, has been Chairman and CEO of Cellum Global Corpora-

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tion, an international group of technology companies, since 2011. 'Tech companies have to realise that advances in the field of artificial intelligence and robots can also be used at other levels with completely different structures, such as diplomacy,' says the 44-year-old entrepreneur. 'The Satosphère is just one example of this. We have to use these tools.'

### App to counteract water shortages in India

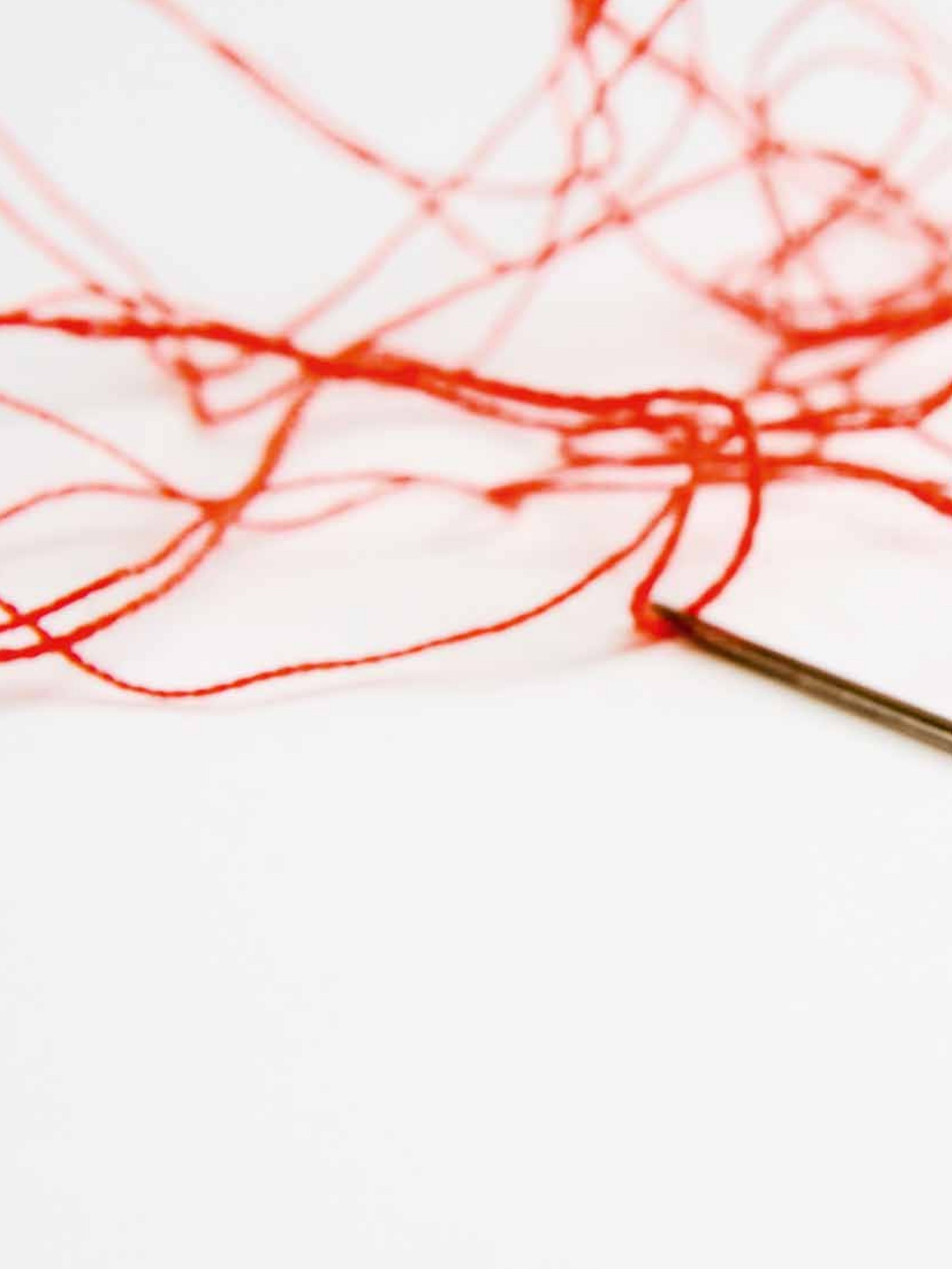
Kóka has been impressed by an idea presented by an Indian participant in Montreal: a water marketplace app to combat the major problem of drought in India. 'Connecting suppliers directly with consumers could eliminate the need for many middlemen,' says Kóka. 'They often delay processes through corruption. The price of drinking water could fall by 90%.'

Day four: before she even sits down to breakfast, Paula Suárez-Buitrón has sent her colleagues at the World Bank in Washington a long list of project ideas.

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## AGENDA 2030

### THEMES

**A COMPASS – EVEN IN TIMES OF CRISIS:** Despite many crises in the world, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to give every person a life in dignity – without putting pressure on the planet.

**OVERVIEW:** Examples of GIZ's work

**'WE OVERSTATE THE NEGATIVE':** Our interview with Oxford economist Max Roser shows how living conditions are improving.

**INFOGRAPHICS:** Some progress – but more work ahead

**'STOP SAYING NOTHING HAS CHANGED!':** Guest article by Amel Karboul from Tunisia



# A compass – even in times of crisis

Agenda 2030 is a plan of action to ensure that all the world's people can live in dignity, freedom and in a healthy environment.

This 'pact on the world's future' requires every country to take on shared responsibility for our planet according to its capacities.

But can the Agenda hold firm when the going gets tough?

TEXT DAGMAR DEHMER

Once upon a time, Marcell Shewaro was a dentist. Today, she is an opposition activist who has set up seven schools in her home city of Aleppo. They are 'underground schools' – banned by the government – in the rebel-held districts of the city. With the official schools destroyed in bombardments and the teachers gone, the underground schools set up by Shewaro's organisation Kesh Malek (Checkmate) hold classes for around 3,000 children in the relative protection of the city's basements. For the pupils, it is a little piece of normality in the madness of war – for life goes on, even for people living with the constant fear of death. An activist since 2011, Shewaro is working for a better, more democratic Syria. She has already been arrested twice – once by the government and the second time by Islamists. In 2014, she fled to Turkey while her organisation continued its work. But in

September 2016, all the underground schools were forced to close, at least for now. In a letter to the Middle East Institute, one of the organisation's founders, Basel Aljunaidy, explained why: 'The Russian air attacks make it impossible for us to work in Aleppo. They are targeting civilians and killing our hope.'

The story of Marcell Shewaro and Basel Aljunaidy, their courage and commitment, is a good example of how keeping faith with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is always worthwhile, even in times of crisis. Quality education is listed fourth in the SDGs, right after the Goals on eradicating poverty, ending hunger and ensuring a healthy life. The work of the Syrian underground activists shows that the SDGs are never obsolete, even in difficult times. The opposite is true: that is when it is especially important for people to uphold the Goals in order to prevent any worsening of the situation. So these are not fair weather targets that the 193 signatory states can focus on when they have nothing else to do. On the contrary, the SDGs provide a compass in times of crisis; put simply, they are in some ways a blueprint for a better world. »

Compass in hand, map in pocket,  
destination in sight – how to find one's  
way in unknown territory



The Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a 15-year roadmap and follows on from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were adopted in 2000 and expired in 2015. The MDGs were the first global consensus for joint action on peace and security, poverty reduction, education, equality, environmental protection, democracy and good governance. The new set of goals is more evenly balanced: for example, like all the other signatories, Saudi Arabia has committed to gender equality, Germany has undertaken to pursue a properly regulated migration policy and China has accepted that the overfishing of the oceans must end. And Zimbabwe, where Robert Mugabe has been in power since 1987, has endorsed the goal of democratic governance. However, it is a matter for each country to decide how it wishes to achieve these universal goals.

Critics complain that with 17 SDGs and 169 targets, there is no longer one stand-out goal. Poverty reduction, they say, is fading into the background. But that's not the case: poverty reduction is still goal number one. Ending poverty without putting life on Earth at risk is still the key priority. However, greater prosperity should no longer be achieved through destructive economic growth. The fact is that along the coasts, on the Pacific islands and in the African savannas, the impacts of unregulated growth are already making themselves felt in the form of climate change.

## Poverty has decreased – but nature often pays the price

Major progress on poverty reduction has been made in the past 15 years – but nature has often paid the price. Figures from the World Bank reveal that in 1981, more than 1.9 billion people were living below the poverty line. Today, the figure is a little less than one billion. Progress is particularly marked in East Asia, which has recently experienced rapid economic

'We can and must be the first generation in human history to end extreme poverty in the world.'

JIM YONG KIM, President of the World Bank

growth. In Latin America, North Africa and the Middle East, too, large numbers of people have been lifted out of poverty. And the World Bank's projections point to a further decrease in future that would bring the international community close to its goal of ending extreme poverty worldwide by 2030.

By balancing the environmental and economic dimensions, the 17 SDGs are now intended to establish the basis for a model of growth which protects the planet's resources and facilitates peaceful and equitable relations among nations – at least, that's the theory. However, crises and conflicts are obstructing the attainment of the Goals to an unprecedented degree.

After the end of the Cold War, we initially seemed to be moving towards a more peaceful world. According to figures from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program in Sweden, however, 2015 had the highest number of armed conflicts since the fall of the Iron Curtain: the number of conflicts involving a state increased to 50, and there were a staggering 70 conflicts in the non-state category, compared with 41 and 61, respectively, in 2014. Faced with these facts, what use is a 'pact on the world's future' like Agenda 2030? What can it achieve in a world which has 'come loose from its moorings', in the words of German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier? But it is now that Agenda 2030 has a vital role to play as a roadmap for international cohesion, providing guidelines for sustainable, forward-looking action to build a more peaceful world. Minister Steinmeier calls it 'an ambitious global transformation programme', which, if taken seriously, creates opportunities for progress and development – all over the world.

Without this compass to guide the international community, entire countries would be at risk of being left behind – due to the outbreak of epidemics, as recently occurred in West Africa, due to the underemployment of millions of young people, as in the »

# 193

is the total number of United Nations members. The new SDGs are the first set of goals to apply to all countries, not just the developing world.

Schools in the midst of conflict: for many children like this young boy in Cizre on the Turkish-Syrian border, war is, sadly, part of daily life.

## EXAMPLES OF GIZ'S WORK

## Agenda 2030 and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals will have a major influence on GIZ's work over the coming years.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement are the framework for international policy-making in the years ahead. The Agenda will also influence GIZ's work. As Tanja Gönner, Chair of GIZ's Management Board, explains: 'The Sustainable Development Goals will be our roadmap for all the projects in which we are involved worldwide.'

In Brazil, for example, GIZ is working to protect the Mata Atlântica forests on the Atlantic coast – and fulfilling several of the Agenda's objectives at once: combat climate change (SDG 13), protect terrestrial ecosystems (SDG 15) and ensure availability of water (SDG 6). The Mata Atlântica includes cities such as São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro and generates more than 70 per cent of the nation's economic output. Over recent decades, however, vast areas of forest have been cleared – with potentially devastating consequences, for the forest acts as a carbon sink of global importance and provides essential ecosystem services, such as supplying drinking water to large numbers of people. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), GIZ and the Brazilian Ministry of Environment

are working together on forest conservation – for Brazil is already feeling the effects of deforestation: longer periods of drought, at least a 1°C rise in average temperature compared with the pre-industrial level in some areas, and more frequent storms. In partnership with the municipalities, GIZ is developing spatial plans, supporting replanting schemes based on local species, training multipliers in climate change adaptation, and planning conservation projects – all of which will benefit the 120 million Brazilians who live in the Mata Atlântica.

On behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), GIZ is helping partner countries to start implementing Agenda 2030 as soon as possible. This may include building reliable tax systems to pay for education and health systems or securing private donors for the partner countries, perhaps through Green Bonds, which are used to fund projects that have environmental and/or climate benefits. Small-scale investors can also subscribe to these bonds. GIZ also builds partner countries' capacities to assess their own progress towards the SDGs, for example by expanding national statistical offices.

## INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

# 30,000,000

euros is being invested in a 'first movers' programme on the SDGs, which GIZ is implementing in 14 countries on behalf of BMZ.

## ADVICE IN MEXICO



Mexico has set up a team of advisors on the implementation of Agenda 2030, which reports to the President. GIZ is providing support to the Government on behalf of BMZ.

## WATER SUPPLY IN ABU DHABI

# 90

days: the length of time Abu Dhabi's stocks of freshwater will last since its supply system was modernised. Previously, it would have run out of water after just three days. GIZ planned and supervised the works, which were commissioned by the Abu Dhabi Water & Electricity Authority (ADWEA).

## TRANSPARENCY IN THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY



The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) promotes transparency in the resource sector – including in Germany since 2014 (D-EITI). It involves governments, companies and civil society. GIZ hosts the EITI Secretariat on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy.



Digitalisation offers many development opportunities – computers are far from being a luxury.

Middle East, or due to the pressure to adapt to climate change, which is already affecting some regions of Africa. All this creates inequality and increases the risk of new conflicts.

At present, some 65 million people are displaced from their homes – more than at any time since the end of the Second World War. Domestic and foreign policy, development and environmental policy are increasingly intermeshed. Global events can have major repercussions at domestic level – not only in Germany. Conversely, domestic developments can radiate out into the wider world, as the crisis in Greece, the attitude towards migration and displacement in Hungary and the US elections show. While many national governments, not least in the European Union, have now switched to full-scale crisis management mode since the start of the financial crisis in 2008, which was followed by the euro crisis and latterly the refugee crisis, Agenda 2030 offers long-term guidance for future-oriented action that promotes security, welfare and peace.

Crises bring out the worst but also the best in people – and unlock their creativity. Somalia is a good

example. Amidst the general chaos of an ungoverned state, resourceful companies have set up a modern and reliable mobile phone network. In 1993, two Somali emigrants living in the US, working with two Americans, founded the Somali Telecom Group, which operated until 2013. At the same time, a subsidiary, Netco, was established in the autonomous region of Puntland. Its operations focused mainly on north-east Somalia. In 2002, two other leading telecoms providers – Hormuud Telecom and Golis Telecom Somalia – entered the market. Hormuud is owned by around 4,000 Somali businesspersons who have shares in the company.

### Standing together against militias in eastern Congo

In eastern Congo, too, it was the business community which promoted social and community cohesion, at least in some areas. The city of Butembo in North Kivu province is a good example. The conflict never reached the city because some local businessmen »

## 'The best road to progress is freedom's road.'

JOHN F. KENNEDY, former US President

came up with the inventive idea of paying to keep the war away. The solution worked for decades: the militias never took control of Butembo. As these examples show, all over the world, unconventional solutions and digital technologies are creating new development opportunities, even for the poor.

Even so, far too many people are still living in poverty. That is why the international community has pledged to end extreme poverty and hunger by 2030 – without destroying the natural environment. In making this pledge, it is building on the experience gained with the Millennium Development Goals which, while less comprehensive, achieved major successes. For example, in most countries, around 90 per cent of children now attain at least a basic education. The task now is to reach the final 10 per cent.

Major advances have been achieved in health care as well. Wherever they live, most people with HIV now have access to life-saving drugs. One of them is Maurine Murenga from Kenya. Diagnosed with HIV in 2002, she was convinced she was about to die. She was tested for HIV when she was pregnant. 'I was given the diagnosis in the full view of the public,' she says. At the hospital, the nurses simply called out the names of people who had tested positive. And at first, it didn't look good for Maurine. She lost her job and with no income, she couldn't afford the treatment. She unwittingly passed the virus to her newborn son although drugs to prevent mother-to-child transmission were available by then. 'I wrote a letter to my baby and made my peace with death,' she says. In the hospitals, there were emaciated figures lying in the corridors. The nurses and physicians were in despair: they had no idea how to help their patients or themselves. All they could do was watch their patients die.

The situation started to improve with the establishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria – one outcome of the Millennium Development Goals – in 2002. A group of wealthy philanthropists led by Microsoft founder Bill Gates and his Foundation persuaded a number of donor governments to set up a new fund to combat the three diseases. At the time, AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria were the main causes of death in Africa. With support from the Fund, life-saving medicines are now affordable, even for low-income groups, in numerous countries of the world. Around 9.2 million of the world's 36 million people with HIV/AIDS are now on antiretroviral treatment. The aim is to completely eradicate diseases such as AIDS by 2030. Many governments have launched programmes to bring this about. Maurine Murenga describes how this has changed her life: 'I can take out a loan for a house in the full expectation that I will live long enough to pay it back.'

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, a public-private partnership, has also achieved some notable successes with its large-scale immunisation campaigns. Since Gavi was established in 2000, polio has been almost eradicated and millions of children have been vaccinated. The aim is to immunise a further 300 million people by 2020, preventing five to six million deaths.

### Nobel Peace Prize recognises civil society's contribution

Reaching the Sustainable Development Goals in countries with weak governance due to a lack of institutional capacities or conflict-related instability is a more difficult challenge. But it is not an impossible task, as the example of Victor Ochen in northern Uganda shows. Now 34, Victor was born in a refugee camp, where he spent 20 years of his life. For years, northern Uganda was terrorised by a Christian militia, the Lord's Resistance Army. In 2005, Victor set up the African Youth Initiative Network. It supports the peace process in northern Uganda and provides reconstructive surgery for people maimed or mutilated in the war, helping to restore their physical appearance and confidence. In 2015, Victor Ochen was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Civil society can do much to promote social cohesion, as the National Dialogue Quartet, the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, shows. Through intensive dialogue, it made a decisive contribution to the building of a pluralistic democracy in Tunisia at a time when it was »

# 1.90

US dollars a day:  
the current threshold  
for extreme poverty.  
The global aim is to  
end poverty everywhere  
by 2030.



# 'We overstate the negative'

Max Roser studies living conditions worldwide. He sees a clear upward trend: conditions are improving – if we take the long view.

## **You look at trends in living conditions around the world. What is the situation today? Are things getting better or worse?**

It depends which time frame you look at. Right now, I get the impression that things are getting worse. But these are just snapshots. The long-term trend looks very different – it's important to remember that. Here, the curve is clearly rising. Take issues such as health, poverty, violence and food – it's astonishing how much has changed for the better over recent decades.

## **Are there any other positive trends?**

Yes, and they can be observed across a range of areas – including some that you wouldn't expect. For example, the murder rate in Europe has steadily declined over the centuries. Most European countries now have an annual murder rate of around one per 100,000 inhabitants. But in earlier centuries, it was more like 30 or 40. Anyone who thinks that the past was a peaceful idyll is mistaken.

## **Why do you think people nowadays have the sense that the world has lost its moorings?**

It's all about perceptions. I don't think there was ever a time in history when people didn't think the world was spinning out of control. We are too quick to look at the negatives and ignore all the progress. That's not to deny the real problems that we face. Climate change, for example: it's real and we have to respond. But we tend to overstate the negatives and think that obstacles are insurmountable. We often get it wrong, I'm happy to say!

## **What about armed conflicts around the world – what's happening there? Are they on the increase or not?**

Again, it's all about time frame. The number of armed conflicts has increased over the past five years, but it hasn't reached the level of the Cold War or the preceding period. The number of fragile states is rising, but in many regions, such as South-East Asia and Latin America, conflicts have de-escalated. That's another positive development which we tend to overlook.

## **What are the most important factors for better living conditions?**

Politics is very important. For a while, we underestimated the significance of politics and overstated the importance of market forces and technological solutions. But the general conditions existing in individual countries and at the international level are the decisive factor. A functioning democracy has a hugely positive impact on living conditions.

## **What about violence – how much influence does that have?**

Violence is undoubtedly a limiting factor, but even in conflict settings, life goes on: people continue to develop new ideas and attempt to improve their lives. Even in these situations, it is possible to make breakthroughs which help to stabilise the situation. There are some interesting research findings available on this subject: they show how inventive people become in order to survive crises. And inevitably, the violence ends sooner or later, so we should never give up. To do that would be a big mistake!

## **You always take the long view, but Agenda 2030 is time-limited to 15 years. Will we have seen any improvements by then?**



MAX ROSER is an economist and researcher at the University of Oxford. Find out about his work here: [www.ourworldindata.org](http://www.ourworldindata.org)

Yes, I think so. That has to do with the following effect: countries which pioneer a breakthrough often take a very long time about it. Take the birth rate: Great Britain took 95 years to reduce the number of births per woman from six to less than three. South Korea managed it in 18 years and Iran did it in 10. That's a very positive trend because population growth needs to fall if we are to achieve sustainable, resource-efficient economic growth. It's the same in other areas: more rapid progress is achieved once pioneers have done the groundwork. Renewable energy use is a good example. Devising a solution the first time round is always the most difficult part. So I think we will see progress over the next 13 years even if the Goals as a whole probably won't be reached.

Interview: Friederike Bauer

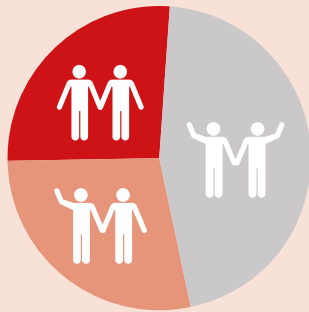
# Some progress – but more work ahead

In the past two decades, the world has made major progress in many areas. The global transformation of energy systems has begun, and poverty and child mortality have decreased. Education levels have risen, as has life expectancy. But there is still a lot to do. The Sustainable Development Goals – a roadmap to 2030 – are intended to reinforce the positive trend achieved in recent years and thus make the world a safer place despite, or because of, the numerous crises.

## Challenges

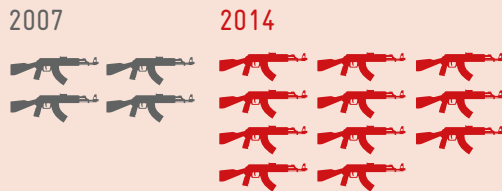
### Limited freedoms

Political freedoms exist in only around half the world's countries. In 2015, 89 out of 195 countries were classed as free, and the rest as partly free or not free.



### More civil wars

The number of civil wars almost tripled between 2007 and 2014.



### Fragile states

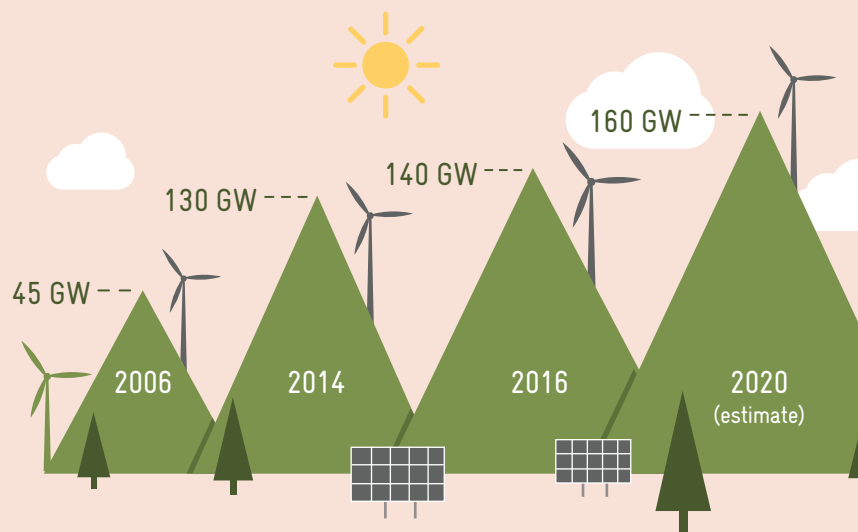
The Fragile State Index 2016 ranks eight countries in the 'Very High Alert' category in terms of their stability.



A further eight countries are in the 'High Alert' category: Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq, Guinea, Nigeria, Pakistan, Burundi and Zimbabwe.

## Clean energy powers ahead

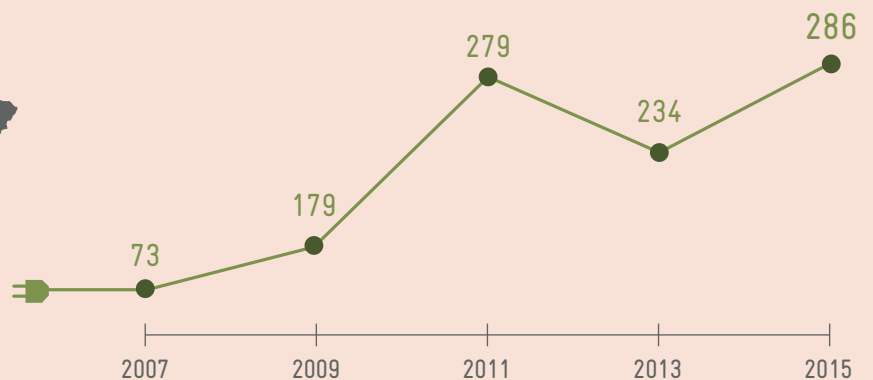
The more than threefold increase in renewable energy use in just a decade has exceeded expectations. This sector now accounts for more than 50 per cent of all new energy capacity installations.



In gigawatts (1 GW = 1,000,000,000 watts)

## Green investment

Investment in renewables has soared: the global energy transition is well under way.



Figures in US\$ billion

## Progress

### More education

Worldwide, more than 90 per cent of children are now enrolled in school – up from just 83 per cent in 2000.



### Lower child mortality

In 1990, 90 children per 1,000 live births died before the age of five. The global figure was 12.7 million. Today, that figure has halved.

1990



12.7 MILLION

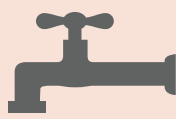
2015



6 MILLION

### More clean water

The number of people with access to safe water has almost doubled in just 25 years.



1990

2.3 billion

2015

4.2 billion

### Less poverty

The share of the world's people living in extreme poverty has fallen dramatically since 1990.



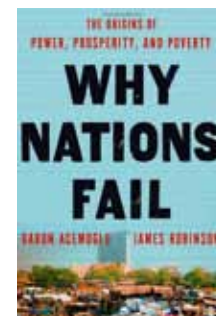
47%



14%

needed most. Trade unionist Houcine Abassi and industry leader Ouided Bouchamaoui, together with Abdessattar Ben Moussa, head of the Human Rights League (LTDH), and Mohamed Fadhel Mahfoudh, President of the Tunisian Order of Lawyers, guided Tunisia's conflicting political movements towards a compromise which contributed to the country's democratisation.

The Sustainable Development Goals are intended to link the fight against hunger and poverty with sustainable economic development. This can be achieved with the use of renewable energies, for example. Energy therefore features in the list of goals for the first time (SDG 7). Morocco is pursuing a large-scale solution: at Ouarzazate in the south of the country, it is building the world's largest solar energy plant. Phase I of the project involves the installation of 150 MW of capacity. Upon completion, the project will provide 1.3 million people with clean energy. Ouarzazate is part of the country's comprehensive strategy to expand its renewable energy sector: renewables are to provide almost half the country's electricity by 2020. This large-scale solar power plant will be the first of several. The Kingdom of Morocco is also promoting wind power on a massive scale. More than 170 countries – including China and Brazil, but also Saudi Arabia, Ghana, Costa Rica and Mexico – have now set themselves national renewable energy targets, compared with only 55 a decade ago. Mexico – one of Latin America's oil-producing countries – aims to generate around 35 per cent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2025 and, like Morocco, is focusing on solar and wind energy, of which it has an abundant supply.



Economist Daron Acemoglu and Harvard-based political scientist James A. Robinson show that state failure is not inevitable but partly a consequence of efforts by elites to aggrandize power.

### A solar panel for lighting, cooling and mobile phone charging

Many companies and individuals are investing in renewable energies as well. One example is Berlin-based Mobisol, which supplies solar panels to Ghana, Tanzania and other African countries. Mobisol trains technicians to sell, install and maintain the modules, thus creating jobs. The users pay for the panels in instalments; most own them outright within two years. After that, they simply pay a maintenance fee. The money is transferred via a digital payments system. One panel is enough to charge a battery for lighting, mobile phone charging and a TV or fridge.

Smaller-scale projects like this one can therefore improve conditions too. Studies have shown that around 60 per cent of the SDGs can only be achieved with the involvement of local stakeholders. In November »



Large-scale power generation from solar plants like in Ouarzazate in Morocco is an important aspect of Agenda 2030.



Find out more about the Sustainable Development Goals with the SDGs in Action app. [sdgsinaction.com](http://sdgsinaction.com)

2016, the German Environment Ministry granted additional support for Jordan's water sector. The grant will fund three local projects to reduce energy use in water treatment, for as researchers at the German Development Institute (DIE) explain, in this region '... both the energy and the water crises risk the reinforcement of existing social inequalities, triggering further political instability.' The projects in Jordan will substantially reduce energy consumption at a wastewater treatment facility by recovering biogas to power the plant.

Another form of energy use has severe consequences in Africa and elsewhere: the use of fuelwood for cooking, which is detrimental not only to health. In East Africa, entire forests have been felled for charcoal production. In order to halt this deforestation, hundreds of thousands of families – again, with German support – are being provided with efficient, clean-burn cookstoves which consume just a third to half of the fuel previously required. As these examples show, the social, economic and environmental dimensions of progress can be brought into alignment. In order to achieve the SDGs,

it is important to continue with development, even if we only take small steps, especially when the world around us appears to be falling apart. It is then that tilling the fields, teaching the children, offering vocational training in refugee camps, supporting businesses, protecting water sources, making use of digitalisation and strengthening democracy have an important role to play.

Conflicts can only be permanently de-escalated if people see that they have access to alternative livelihoods: in other words, if they gain more from peace than they lose through conflict. The Sustainable Development Goals open up a shared view of the future for the entire world. However, a positive approach is essential if this global pact is to become reality. Agenda 2030 is, after all, the most ambitious roadmap for a sustainable future ever adopted by humankind.

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[sustainabledevelopment.un.org](http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org)



# 'Stop saying nothing has changed!'

Guest article by Amel Karboul

I had the reputation of being the most poised person in the family, not taking criticism personally and keeping my cool in the midst of storms. But lately I often get angry. Because in many parts of Tunisia I hear: nothing has changed!

When Tunisians talk about Tunisia, modesty and humility are not the first characteristics. We are extremely proud since we believe we have the best food, the finest weather, outstanding art, design and historical heritage etc. Our Coliseum at El Djem is better preserved than the one in Rome, our mosaic collections are the greatest in the world. We were the first Muslim country to abolish slavery in 1846 and the first Arab state to formally abolish polygamy in 1956, and women in Tunisia enjoy some of the greatest freedoms in the Arab world.

But when it comes to one of the most remarkable achievements of our recent history, our democratic revolution in 2011 and its success thereafter, then suddenly our pride fades away.

Let's not forget that Tunisia today is a full-fledged democracy. Yes, we are all learning what it really means and the implementation of democratic routines is still in the making. But if anyone had told you just a decade ago that there will be an Arab country that is 100 per cent democratic, you would have answered: impossible.

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## PROFILE

AMEL KARBOUL is Secretary General of the Maghreb Economic Forum. She served as Minister of Tourism in Tunisia's interim government after the Arab Spring.

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Secondly, we have one of the most modern constitutions in the world. It includes familiar rights such as freedom of speech but also innovative ones like the right to a clean environment or the protection of women against violence. And in 2014 we had democratic, free and accepted parliamentary and presidential elections. I vividly remember the day in February 2015 when my colleagues and I handed over the leadership of the country. We were moved to tears to be part of such a historic moment, a peaceful change of government.

Finally the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the Tunisian 'National Dialogue Quartet', recognising its unique journey in dialogue and conflict resolution. The term 'Tunisian Way' has been coined and is in use today in political science, and our neighbour Libya, for example, is struggling to find a similar way out of the crisis.

Unfortunately, we do and did not celebrate these achievements enough. And

some radical groups are using and abusing the 'nothing has changed' image to attract youth into extremist endeavours. Extremism and the sense that the future has nothing to offer are threatening our free world – regardless of the nationality of the extremists. Attacks like the one in Berlin in December 2016 must not happen again.

At the beginning, Tunisian civil society was motivated, engaged and proactive in its fight for rights. It was involved at the highest level in co-creating the new constitution. However, in recent months, one can feel a tiredness, maybe even a helplessness among the citizens.

True: youth unemployment and corruption, which were among the root causes of the Jasmine Revolution, are still challenging us. But are we aware that political, social and economic change cannot happen overnight? That other countries needed centuries to achieve what we have achieved in five years? That today after the revolution a new task is awaiting Tunisia: the long, perilous and rewarding work of an evolution. An evolution in culture, education, a new social contract and the building of strong institutions are the areas of focus. We are in the midst of that process and sometimes overlook the progress we have made. But we are well on our way. So let's stop saying nothing has changed.





## Space for sport

One of Thailand's largest informal settlements is located in the densely populated district of Khlong Toei in the country's capital Bangkok. Here, even basic necessities such as water and sanitary facilities are in short supply. And spaces for recreation are rare. But they do exist, as demonstrated by this sports ground, squeezed into the narrow gap between two rows of high-rise buildings. GIZ works to improve life in informal settlements in many countries, for example by providing advisory services on waste avoidance and recycling.

Photo: dpa/pa

# A PARTNER FOR BUSINESSES

What do improved health care in Africa and reliable components for German cars have in common? Susanne Wolfgarten explains the connection and the contribution GIZ is making.

Doctors and nurses from Germany are exchanging knowledge on patterns of disease with their counterparts in developing and emerging countries and discussing available treatments. They take part in joint training sessions and are setting up digital networks. The administrative staff at their clinics are also engaged in dialogue to develop improved health care solutions. In Ethiopia, for example, modern standards in gynaecology have been introduced as a result of this type of clinic partnership. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Else Kröner Fresenius Foundation are seeking to promote partnerships like these. The initiative is coordinated by GIZ.

Another example of our cooperation with foundations is the longstanding partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. On behalf of BMZ and in partnership with the foundation, we are helping 120,000 rice farmers in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria and Tanzania to raise yields using innovative farming techniques, for instance. Not only do individual farmers improve their income, the countries themselves become less dependent on imports.

We also work closely with companies, in particular through the *developpp.de* programme of BMZ. It provides financial and technical support to companies that invest in developing and emerging countries. Companies also participate in existing projects, if these are compatible with their corporate objectives. A third form of cooperation involves companies commissioning projects directly from GIZ. This enables them to contribute ideas of their own. At the same time, we en-

sure that these projects comply with development policy guidelines of the German Government. This means working with partners at the local level to develop joint solutions.

One example of a partnership with companies can be found in China, where we



SUSANNE WOLFGARTEN is responsible at GIZ for initiating business with companies and foundations.

are collaborating with German carmakers on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. The car industry has a keen interest in importing reliable products. Our role involves bringing together representatives of companies, associations and ministries from both countries and working with them to improve standards. We also pursue this approach in other sectors, including the toy industry.

The African Cashew initiative (p. 40) is another example of a partnership with foundations and the private sector. What makes companies want to get involved? For many it is the result of pressure from customers demanding more sustainable production. This is particularly true of companies operating in the consumer goods sector. GIZ advises Lidl, for example, on improving working conditions in textiles factories in Bangladesh. When we receive a direct commission from a company, we work without the use of taxpayers' money. Commissions like these are implemented by GIZ's taxable business arm International Services.

Cooperation with companies and foundations is becoming increasingly important, particularly against the backdrop of the Agenda 2030. The aim is to reconcile economic progress with social justice and the environmental constraints of our planet. The Agenda takes into account all three sustainability dimensions: the social, the environmental, the economic. Its goals cannot be achieved using public funds alone. The involvement of companies and foundations is therefore necessary and appropriate.

Defining the nature of this involvement is a matter for each individual company, a process that GIZ and our partners will be pleased to support. The chances of success are greatest when changes take place not just as a result of social responsibility, but when they concern a company's core processes.

Previous 'Background' articles on GIZ's work can be found at: [akzente.giz.de/en](https://akzente.giz.de/en)



# COMMITMENT

Where GIZ is active, how it approaches new challenges, what its projects achieve: three examples of GIZ's current work in Afghanistan, Ghana and Colombia.



## MAKING A FRESH START

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**COLOMBIA** How María Leíver Urrego and other internally displaced persons are shaping a peaceful future. **Page 44**



## SOLUTION IN A NUTSHELL

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**GHANA** How Victoria Ataa became a cashew pioneer and convinced others that nuts are a valuable commodity. **Page 40**



## A PASSION TO TEACH

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**AFGHANISTAN** How Haroon Halimi gets his students excited about electronics and where he finds his inspiration. **Page 34**



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# A PASSION TO TEACH

In Afghanistan there is a shortage of well-qualified vocational school teachers like Haroon Halimi. An educational reform is now improving prospects for the country's highly motivated youth.

TEXT MARIAN BREHMER

PHOTOS MUSTAFA NAJAFIZADA

Sparks are flying in the electrical engineering lab. The air is heavy with the smell of molten metal. Three young men in white shirts are busy trying to solder electrical cables. Opposite them on the bench, some of their colleagues are tinkering with screwdrivers on an electrical testing wall. Their task is to get to grips with and re-configure a life-like circuit board.

Haroon Halimi keeps a careful eye on what his young students are doing. He is a teacher of practical and theoretical electrical engineering at the Technical School of Kabul, the Kabul Mechanical Institute. Today the 27-year-old is wearing a shirt and black jacket. With a shock of dark hair gelled into position, his smart appearance underlines the professionalism with which Halimi has been doing his job at the school for the last two and a half years.

'For me, being a teacher means having the freedom to pass all my knowledge on to my students,' says Halimi, himself a former student at the institute. One of his own teachers was his father, who has been a lecturer at the Technical School for 45 years. As a teenager, Halimi was allowed to watch his father doing rewiring jobs at houses in Kabul. That is where he developed the passion for circuitry and electronics that he passes on to his students today. He acquired the skills for the job by completing a two-year course at a training academy, funded by GIZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

## In short supply: modern vocational schools with a practical bias

High-quality vocational training in Afghanistan is in short supply. Dissatisfaction with teaching staff results in over half of all vocational students abandoning their training early. Moreover, many families cannot afford to send their sons and daughters to a vocational school in the first place. Children in Afghanistan are often required to contribute to the family income or care for relatives at an early age.

Although many new vocational schools have been established in Afghanistan in the last five years, their reach currently remains limited. Compared with traditional appren-

ticeships in small family-run businesses, vocational school training courses still play only a minor role. Out of the 1.4 million Afghan youths not in mainstream schooling, just five per cent are enrolled at a vocational school. Over three quarters however receive training in the informal economy, typically from their fathers.

Since 2010, GIZ has been committed to developing a nationwide vocational education system in Afghanistan on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. The approach builds on existing structures: modernising conventional apprentice training and improving the quality of classroom-based vocational training.

But it is about much more than improving employment opportunities for young people. In a land as fragmented as Afghanistan, 'vocational training is a key to improving social integration,' explains Gustav Reier from GIZ. But to achieve that, there has to be effective governance, which recognises the value of vocational education and responds accordingly. 'Afghanistan has a highly motivated youth,' the expert continues, 'but in the country's vocational schools, these young people often encounter poorly qualified and uncommitted vocational school teachers, as well as school management teams that are failing in their duties.' GIZ hopes to change this.

German involvement in the Afghan TVET system goes back a long way: the

Turning a childhood passion into a career: Haroon Halimi is ranked among the top ten teachers of electrical engineering in Afghanistan.

**Right: Resolute:** School principal Dena Azizi ensures that many apprentices come from the provinces. Just one fifth of students come from Kabul.

**Below: Friendly:** Teacher Halimi attaches great importance to establishing a good learning environment. He achieves this using his knowledge of educational methods and theories.

**Page 37 top: Focused:** Around 70 of the approximately 1,300 trainees at the Technical School in Kabul are women – and the figure is set to increase in future.

**Page 37 bottom: Up-to-date:** Trainees use state-of-the-art equipment for practical work, and the latest teaching materials for theory.



vocational school concept was founded with German aid over half a century ago as the first technical school in Afghanistan. Today, German experts are collaborating with Afghan vocational school teachers to develop up-to-date course content and equip vocational schools with new teaching and learning materials. This one institute alone benefits 1,300 students – predominantly boys, but also 70 girls.

In particular, modern machines and apparatus are required for practical teaching. Aspiring technical students must learn as much as possible about everyday professional life while at school. Part-time study models are also being introduced to enable young people from poorer families to attend school. These models ensure there is enough time for a traditional apprenticeship or temporary job alongside the course.

### A new generation of teachers for rural regions

Haroon Halimi knows all too well the challenges facing his country. ‘As a child I always wondered why we had no electricity at home in the evenings,’ he recalls. He and his family spent eight years as refugees in neighbouring Pakistan during the Afghan civil war. Electricity was a luxury commodity – which is why it is all the more important, he adds, that Afghanistan today has good teachers to train a new generation of capable electrical engineers. ‘Afghanistan needs electrical engineers who are committed to providing a better electricity supply.’

As a graduate of the first year’s intake at the Technical Teacher Training Academy (TTTA) in Kabul, Halimi not only added to his knowledge of the subject. In addition to technical training, his course also included modules on aspects such as teaching theories and methods as well as psychology. ‘I now feel I’m able to read my students’ faces better and respond to their individual needs,’ says Halimi. He attaches particular importance to establishing a friendly classroom environment.

Developed jointly with the Afghan Deputy Ministry of TVET, the academy is





situated in the south of Kabul at the foot of the Chehel Sotun hill, overlooking one of the city's smog-covered districts. The academy's modern brick complex accommodates classrooms, workshops, and a hostel providing accommodation for students from rural areas.

One of these is 20-year-old Majnoon Safi. Safi comes from Kapisa, a small province 80 kilometres northeast of Kabul. Safi's textbooks are spread out on the bunk bed he shares with a classmate, along with a neatly folded prayer mat and an immersion heater to make tea.

The young man exudes energy and enthusiasm. After completing the training course in Kabul, he plans to work as a teacher in his home province. 'The lecturers



Also available on the akzente app and on the website: Haroon Halimi on video [akzente.giz.de/en](https://akzente.giz.de/en)

**Top:** Well equipped: The Technical Teacher Training Academy includes a hostel as well as modern workshops and classrooms.

**Right:** Very satisfied: Majnoon Safi from the province of Kapisa feels at home in the hostel and has nothing but praise for his teachers. They have kept their sense of curiosity and give all students a chance to prove themselves, he says.



at the training academy have all the qualities I missed in the teachers back home,' Safi says, before going on to explain what makes a good teacher. 'Just like the students, a teacher should never stop learning. And they shouldn't make snap judgements about their students,' Safi says.

Like him, most of the students come from rural areas. 'Only 20 per cent of our students are from Kabul, the rest come from the other 33 provinces,' explains Dena Azizi, the TTTA principal. With a policy that targets recruitment of young people from the provinces, her aim is to counteract the shortage of teachers in rural regions. 800 graduates have already successfully completed the training course since the school opened in 2011.

## Using one's talents to help others

In addition to electrical engineering, the academy provides specialist rooms for technical subjects such as woodwork, metalwork, sanitary engineering and motor mechanics. Together with its sister school, the Technical Teacher Training Academy in Mazar-e Sharif, the teacher training programme is currently providing training for around 600 aspiring vocational school teachers. As multipliers, their role is to promote modern, high-quality vocational education and training in rural regions also.

For Haroon Halimi from the Technical School in Kabul, training to become a vocational school teacher has been well worth the effort: in a test for 100 Afghan teachers of electrical engineering he ranked in the top ten. He is determined to use his skills to encourage other young people: 'After two years' experience in the job, I feel I'm well equipped to assess the potential of my students.'

### › CONTACT

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## AFGHANISTAN



**CAPITAL:**  
Kabul

**POPULATION:**  
30.6 million

**GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER CAPITA:**  
USD 590<sup>1</sup>

**ECONOMIC GROWTH:**  
1.5 per cent<sup>1</sup>

**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX RANKING:**  
171 (out of 188)

Source: <sup>1</sup>World Bank 2015

## FIT FOR THE JOB

### PROJECT:

SUPPORTING TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN AFGHANISTAN

### COMMISSIONED BY:

GERMAN FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (BMZ)

### LEAD EXECUTING AGENCY:

AFGHAN DEPUTY MINISTRY OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AFGHAN MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

### OVERALL TERM:

2010 TO 2017

There are currently around 1.7 million young people in Afghanistan of an appropriate age for vocational training. But traditional informal training and courses at the country's existing 250 vocational schools are failing to meet the demands the economy is placing on young employees. For this reason, GIZ is helping Afghanistan to develop a network of modern vocational schools. GIZ provides initial and further training courses for teachers and is developing curricula for vocations in future-oriented industries. Around 19,000 young people, a quarter of them women, are currently undertaking training in these occupations at one of 35 vocational schools. Experts have developed special courses for the large number of illiterate young people in Afghanistan. Around 1,500 young people have already taken part in these special training courses.

[www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14616.html](http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14616.html)





# SOLUTION IN A NUTSHELL

The cultivation of cashew nuts has improved the lives of many farmers in Ghana. But for a long time the potential of these mildly sweet, kidney-shaped kernels remained unexploited.

TEXT PHILIPP HEDEMANN

PHOTOS THOMAS IMO

**T**hese trees have changed my life, they have made me a happy woman,' says Victoria Ataa, lovingly patting the bark of the tree that provides her with shade from the midday sun. The Ghanaian farmer is seated under a cashew tree in the village of Congo. Its fruits have not only freed the 66-year-old from abject poverty, they have also made her a role model for thousands of other farmers across Africa.

Fourteen years ago, Ataa used to sit by the roadside selling water in plastic bags. It was, the proud woman explains, an undignified job for a farmer, but her fields were just not productive enough to make a living from. As the dry periods became more frequent, the harvests dwindled. Only the trees with the strange, kidney-shaped kernels seemed unaffected by the drought. But in the same fields where Ataa's grandfather had once planted yams, manioc and corn, nobody knew what to do with this peculiar, unfamiliar fruit. A few 'strange Indians' used to buy the nuts from the children at a knockdown price, Ataa recalls.

Then one day, while the farmer was wondering how she would feed her five children and send them to school, a man came over and spoke to her. 'A woman like

you should not be sitting here on the roadside. A woman like you should be growing cashew nuts,' said the customer. He was chair of the Cashew Industry Association of Ghana. He told her that global demand for the sweet, buttery nuts was growing by around ten per cent each year, with prices rising even more quickly. Moreover, he went on, there were no signs of the trend slowing and Ghana was one of the best areas for growing cashews anywhere in the world.

## A rarely used ingredient in Ghanaian cuisine

Ataa tried to find out everything there was to know about cashew nuts in Ghana. It did not amount to much. Most farmers at the time had no idea how to increase yields from the trees, nor how to store and process the nuts. At the same time, they had little idea who might buy the nuts and at what price, so few farmers showed much interest in the kernels – even today they remain a rarely used ingredient in Ghanaian cuisine. But Ghana was not the only country making little use of its cashew trees. In many other African countries, the nuts were left rotting in the fields, while worldwide demand and prices continued to rise.

The African Cashew initiative (ACi) was launched in 2009 with the aim of harnessing this enormous untapped potential. On behalf of the German Federal Ministry

for Economic Cooperation and Development and in cooperation with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and over 30 private sector partners, GIZ implemented the programme in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Mozambique.

The African Cashew initiative, which in 2016 was awarded the DAC innovation prize of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), targets the entire process: from production and processing to sales and export. 'Experts give farmers advice on how they can increase their yields – and therefore their income – through improved growing, harvesting and storage techniques,' explains Rita Weidinger from GIZ. 'This approach has so far benefited more than 430,000 farmers in participating countries. Many of them have been able to double their income from cashews in this way.'

Victoria Ataa has taken part in several of these training courses. And the success is tangible: 'I used to harvest five to eight sacks of cashews, this year it was 16,' she says with pride. And not only has she more nuts, she also sells them at a higher price. 'Before we took part in the training courses, the dealers often used to cheat us. Now we know what our nuts are worth, so we no longer allow ourselves to get ripped off,' the widow explains with self-confidence. Today she can get the equivalent of 90 euro cents for a kilo of unshelled nuts; ten years ago it was just nine euro cents.

'Exotic fruits': For a long time nobody in Ghana knew what to do with cashews. Now farmers have recognised the tree's potential.

**Top:** Farmer Victoria Ataa is a pioneer of cashew nut cultivation in Africa.

**Bottom:** The seedlings are carefully nurtured before being planted out by an increasing number of farmers in their fields (left). The cashew-processing factory in Mim employs up to 1,200 people (right).



The money has enabled her to build a new house, buy several cows and send her eldest son to university in Accra. Having taken a degree in agriculture, he now teaches at the university of applied sciences in the capital. As often as he is able, he makes the day's journey to visit his mother in her village. And the agricultural expert always gives her the same advice: 'Mama, plant more cashew trees. They are the future.' Ataa has listened to her son. She has even planted cashews on her uncle's land. And in her fields she often receives visits from other farmers keen to learn how they too can increase their

harvests. 'I'm not afraid of competitors,' says Ataa. 'Demand is still greater than supply. I learned a lot from the training courses. Now I want to pass on what I know.'

She bought the seedlings for her new field at the Cashew Research Station in nearby Wenchi. Here, Arthur Robert and his 14 co-workers conduct experiments in laboratories, a nursery and on 365 hectares of testing ground. By crossing different cashew varieties, they aim to make the trees even higher yielding and more resistant to drought and pests. Progress has been remarkable. Without any genetic engineer-

ing, the scientists have succeeded in increasing the average harvest from 4-8 kilos per tree to 20-35 kilos. Robert is convinced that the figures can go much higher. 'There will probably be less rainfall in Ghana in future as a result of climate change. But for the cashew tree that is not a problem. It copes well with dry weather. So our goal in the next few years is to turn Ghana into one of the leading international producers.'

Joseph Yeung has his fingers crossed for the researcher. Born in Shanghai, the manager heads up the second-largest cashew processing facility in Ghana. At the

height of the season, there are as many as 1,200 people working for the company based at Mim in western Ghana, which was advised by the African Cashew initiative. With a lot of the processes involving manual work, they free the sweet kernels from their hard shells, remove the thin skin from around the nuts and pack them ready for export. When Yeung took over management of the facility in 2010, his workers produced around 800 tonnes per year; today the figure is nearer 5,000 tonnes. 'We could easily process 7,500 tonnes here, but unfortunately sometimes nuts are in short supply.'

### The factory as a staging post on the way to other training


Many of the company's workforce are in steady employment for the first time. Around three quarters of them are women. Ernestina Adu-Gayanfuah is busy sorting cashew kernels by size, quality and colour on a brightly lit table. She will process close to a hundredweight in her eight-hour shift. 'The pay is okay and our free lunch is very good. We also get 15 days paid holidays per year and receive our wages even when we're sick. But I don't want to spend my entire life here sorting nuts,' says the young woman who spent twelve years at school. The 22-year-old has plans to become a nurse. But for the training she needs money – and the cashew factory is the best way to earn enough to pay the fees.

Soon, perhaps, the young factory worker will be sorting nuts from Victoria Ataa's new field. The single-minded farmer is determined to continue increasing her production. 'In the past I never wanted my now grown-up children to become farmers. But since we started farming cashews, I've nothing against my grandchildren following in my footsteps.'

#### > CONTACT

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## GHANA



**CAPITAL:**  
Accra

**POPULATION:**  
approx. 27 million

**GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER CAPITA:**  
USD 1,381<sup>1</sup>

**ECONOMIC GROWTH:**  
3.9 per cent<sup>1</sup>

**HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX RANKING:**  
140 (out of 188)

Source: <sup>1</sup>World Bank 2015

## READY TO FACE THE COMPETITION

#### PROJECT:

AFRICAN CASHEW INITIATIVE (ACI)

#### COMMISSIONED BY:

BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION, 30 OTHER PARTNERS FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR, GERMAN FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

#### LEAD EXECUTING AGENCY:

GHANAIAN MINISTRY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

#### OVERALL TERM:

2009 TO 2018

430,000 farmers in five countries have so far benefited from the African Cashew initiative: in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Mozambique. It has created around 6,000 new jobs in processing, three quarters of them for women. In Ghana alone, over 60,000 farmers have taken part in training courses organised by the African Cashew initiative to improve the quality of nuts. Almost nine out of ten farmers now apply their new knowledge on a daily basis. Yields have risen from 530 kilograms per hectare in 2010 to as much as 958 kilograms in 2015. Almost 2,500 jobs were created in Ghana, the majority of them for women. The African Cashew initiative is also supported by companies such as Intersnack, Kraft Heinz, Olam and SAP. These companies bear the majority of the costs.

[www.africancashewinitiative.org](http://www.africancashewinitiative.org)

# MAKING A FRESH START

After more than 50 years of civil war, Colombia has more internally displaced persons (IDPs) than any other country in the world. Parliament recently adopted a peace agreement with the FARC, but this now has to be given substance. Reconciliation projects like the one in the city of Florencia paint a picture of a brighter future.

TEXT AND PHOTOS THOMAS WAGNER

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The distant summits of the Andes are shrouded in mist. The dirt track that runs in front of the brightly painted houses in La Ilusión, a neighbourhood in the Colombian departmental capital Florencia, has been turned into a quagmire by the incessant rain.

María Leíver Urrego and her neighbours are unfazed. The 30 women, men and children have put up their umbrellas and are standing in a circle. Aromatic steam is rising from the three large pots in front of them and mingling with the raindrops. Earlier today, they all helped to peel potatoes and pluck chickens. Now it is lunchtime, and one after the other they offer words of gratitude. ‘Together we are strong,’ says Urrego, when it is her turn to speak. Then they share out the stew.

The 400 inhabitants of La Ilusión are putting into practice something which in many places remains a remote prospect in this South American country torn apart by violence. Former fighters and those they drove out of the village now live side by side. ‘We look after one another,’ says Urrego with conviction.

This is thanks in part to the Fundación para la Reconciliación (‘Foundation for Reconciliation’), which has a centre just a few streets away. GIZ has been supporting the work of the centre since 2015 on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. During the centre’s two-week training courses, Urrego and her neighbours – both victims and perpetrators – would sit together in a room, talking and getting to know and understand one another better. Social workers were on hand to support the difficult process of rapprochement between the two sides. ‘I haven’t forgotten, but I have forgiven,’ says 54-year-old Urrego reflectively.

Indefatigable: María Leíver Urrego, herself a victim of the conflict, works on behalf of IDPs. She spends her evenings sewing clothes for a small income.

There are more IDPs living in Colombia than in any country in the world – more than in Syria and its neighbouring countries. It is the sad legacy of a conflict that has continued for over 50 years between the government, the left-wing rebel ‘guerrillas’ and the right-wing paramilitary. Members of the guerrilla movement were originally fighting for social justice in this South American country, where the divide between rich and poor is deeper than almost anywhere else on the continent. But many guerrilla fighters themselves became perpetrators of violence. Official sources put at over eight million the number of victims of violence and displacement, including more than 200,000 dead and thousands disappeared. But the largest group is formed of 6.8 million IDPs.

### There are tears as she describes the day she was forced to flee

Urrego radiates kindness, with not a hint of bitterness. She comes from a village four hours’ drive south of Florencia. There, where the eastern end of the Andes chain turns to fertile savannah, her family used to lease a small farm. Her eldest son was in the armed forces, the second son a policeman. They earned a living from their 120 hens and modest pig farm. Then, one sunny day in August 2010, their rural idyll was shattered by rebels from the largest guerrilla group, heavily armed members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC for short.

‘They accused my sons of being informants and wanted to take them away,’ Urrego explains. Her voice cracks for a few seconds. She wipes the tears from her face. That same night, the family set off on a forced march, with two young infants in their arms. A friendly truck driver took them to the capital Bogotá, where they lived for six months – seven people, three generations, all in the same room. Eventually they could stand it no longer and moved to Florencia, where they initially received support from relatives.

Florencia is the capital of the department of Caquetá, historically a FARC stronghold. Fighting was particularly intense here. Three out of four of the population live in Florencia for one reason only: they sought refuge in the big city, where anonymity and the number of neighbours offers greater security.

Colombia’s future remains uncertain. In August 2016, the government and the FARC guerrillas reached a historic peace settlement. But in early October the population rejected the peace agreement in a referendum. Opponents of the agreement criticised the fact that its treatment of the rebels was too lenient. The FARC was to have become a political organisation, for example, with seats in parliament reserved in the years ahead. The agreement was revised and finally passed by parliament in late November.

The government of Juan Manuel Santos still faces enormous challenges, however. In 2011 he initiated a Victims’ Law, which was widely celebrated as the dawn of a new era. But it has only partially fulfilled expectations. Progress with compensation and reintegration for those affected by the conflict has been slow. Many are not even aware that they have a right to compensation or are deterred by the bureaucracy. Nevertheless, there is clear hope that after five decades, the war between the government and the rebels will finally be over. This fact was honoured by the Nobel Committee, which in December awarded Santos the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo for his services.

### From powerlessness to self-determination

But now what has been decided at the political level must be accepted by society as a whole. For this reason, GIZ is providing support to state and non-state institutions in Florencia with coordinating more closely their work on behalf of victims, explains Germán Bernal. He and his colleagues brought to the same table representatives of the victims, the city administration, victims’ agencies, non-governmental organisations and interna-



Also available on the akzente app and on the website: [María Leíver Urrego and others tell their story. akzente.giz.de/en](https://www.akzente.giz.de/en)

**Left:** A hot meal: Urrego (beneath the green umbrella) and her neighbours enjoy a shared pot of stew (above). New home: IDPs make a home for themselves in simple accommodation (below).

**Right:** Profitable: For the first time since becoming displaced, Gloria Vargas Grafe is once again earning a modest income by selling eggs.

tional partners such as the United Nations Refugee Agency and the International Organization for Migration. ‘This enables us to reach out better to those who need our help,’ Bernal says.

What does this mean in practical terms for the population of La Ilusión? Most of them are IDPs without a regular job and with no entitlement to the land on which their modest houses are built. The mayor’s office provides support with legal regulation of the rights to land ownership and offers microloans as start-up aid for self-employment activities. The Government Ombudsman records the testimonies of victims of the conflict – that is a prerequisite for them receiving compensation. ‘The various relief measures are now coming as one,’ explains María Leíver Urrego.

The entrance to her house is made of heavy wooden panels. The neighbour’s wall to the right replaces her own. A curtain partitions off a small bedroom. The floor is not cemented. ‘When it rains, like today, the water comes in,’ says Urrego. But she is content.

Urrego was elected spokesperson at the round table for victims in Florencia in 2015. Every day she meets with people like herself, who have been uprooted by the conflict. She explains their rights to them and works with the city administration and other partners to find ways for them to get a job.

Urrego has an appointment in the settlement of La Granja, a few kilometres outside Florencia. ‘I pay regular visits to the project participants to check that everything is running smoothly,’ she says. The small-holding run by Gloria Vargas Grafe and Arnulfo Sanabria is clean and tidy. The lawn has been mown shorter than in a German allotment. The wooden walls are decked with photos of the children. Grafe and Sanabria were driven out of their home 12 years ago by FARC guerrillas. At the time they kept chickens on their farm and grew manioc and plantains.

Grafe, a shy woman in her early fifties, mostly keeps a low profile behind her husband. But the chicken coop behind the house

is her domain. She keeps around 40 cackling hens. Grafe picks up an egg. ‘That’s the fourteenth today.’ In December 2015, GIZ gave her around 20 chickens and materials with which to build the coop; at the same time, it provided the couple with advice on keeping hens. Grafe is now able to sell her eggs to neighbours.

### Full-time job: standing up for the rights of IDPs

A similar start-up grant enabled 16 other farmers from the settlement to develop small hen or fish farms. And even more families followed in 2016, selected by Urrego’s round table. ‘There can be no peace on an empty stomach,’ she says.

Urrego’s diary is absolutely full. Today she is expected at a gathering at San Francisco Square in the centre of Florencia. The occasion is the National Day of Remembrance and Solidarity with Victims of Armed Conflict. Everyone is there – her neighbours from La Ilusión, the city’s employees. Urrego is nervous, she has to deliver a speech. She goes over the keywords jotted down on her slip of paper one last time.

Then she gets up onto the stage and speaks. The people applaud. Twelve months ago she was just a simple woman from the countryside; now she is a lobbyist for people who have lost their homes. ‘I get my strength from helping others,’ says Urrego.

And she needs strength, for her voluntary work amounts to a full-time job. She gets up at four o’clock in the morning. Rarely does she go to bed before midnight. In the evenings she sits at her sewing machine and makes clothes to order. It is her only income. ‘Even my granddaughters say to me: “Grandma, you should make more time for yourself.”’ But for Urrego there is little opportunity to relax. She wants to earn her school leaving certificate and then study law, so she will be even better at defending the rights of IDPs.

#### › CONTACT

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## COLOMBIA



<b>CAPITAL:</b>	Bogotá
<b>POPULATION:</b>	49 million
<b>GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER CAPITA:</b>	USD 7,130 <sup>1</sup>
<b>ECONOMIC GROWTH:</b>	3.1 per cent <sup>1</sup>
<b>HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX RANKING:</b>	97 (out of 188)

Source: <sup>1</sup>World Bank 2015

## BACK TO LIFE

### PROJECT:

FORTES: STRUCTURAL STRENGTHENING OF SUPPORT SERVICES AND THE INTEGRATION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN CAQUETÁ, COLOMBIA

### COMMISSIONED BY:

GERMAN FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

### LEAD EXECUTING AGENCY:

GOVERNMENT OF CAQUETÁ DEPARTMENT

### OVERALL TERM:

2014 TO 2017

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Colombia have the right to state support if they are registered as victims. But even many of those included in the IDP registry – 200,000 people in the Department of Caquetá – are not aware of the benefits on offer. GIZ is providing support to state and non-state agencies in Caquetá to improve coordination of the registration process as well as support and information services for victims.

A central victim support service point has been set up in the capital Florencia. Cooperatives and farmers’ organisations also receive support from the service point with their applications for government funding. In addition, those affected can gain access to vocational training and learn how to facilitate contact with employers. More than 3,500 people, predominantly women, have increased their income.

[www.giz.de/en/worldwide/29077.html](http://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/29077.html)

# EDITOR'S PICKS



## FILM IN OUAGADOUGOU

**BIENNALE** The Pan-African Film Festival of Ouagadougou – Fespaco for short – is Africa’s premier film event. Every two years, filmmakers and fans from around the world converge on the capital of Burkina Faso for new films by African directors or set predominantly against an African backdrop. The 2015 Golden Stallion award went to Moroccan director Hicham Ayouch for his film ‘Fevers’, which tells the story of a fragile father-son relationship.

Fespaco runs from  
25 February to 4 March 2017  
[www.fespaco.bf](http://www.fespaco.bf)

## PHOTOGRAPHY IN PARIS

**FESTIVAL** Contemporary European photography is the focus of the ‘Circulation(s)’ festival in Paris. The festival is a laboratory for experimental contemporary photography and a springboard for promising young photographers. The jury’s selection for 2017 includes the Syrian-French photographer Poline Harbali with a collection entitled ‘The Damascus of others’ (photo). In her work, Harbali creates imaginary spaces that bring her closer to her family in Syria, from whom she is now separated because of the war.

‘Circulation(s)’ runs from  
21 January to 5 March 2017  
[www.festival-circulations.com](http://www.festival-circulations.com)





# LITPROM RECOMMENDS

Litprom – the Society for the Promotion of African, Asian and Latin American Literature – provided these reviews for akzente. The titles were selected from Litprom’s list of best new novels. [www.litprom.de](http://www.litprom.de)



## SELECTION DAY

**NOVEL** Manju, a young boy from the slums, is a talented cricketer. Suddenly, he is a golden boy. Cricket in India is like football elsewhere: it is both religion and obsession, a chance for the underdog to make good and an investment opportunity for millionaires. But Adiga’s magical characters defy definition: they are unforgettable as they seek their fortune in the sprawl that is the city of Mumbai.

*Cornelia Zetzsche, literary editor, critic and presenter*

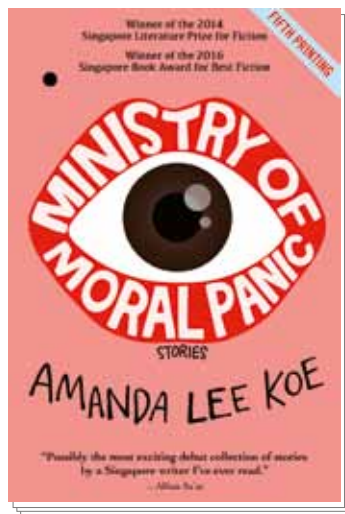
Aravind Adiga, India  
Picador, 352 pages

## MINISTRY OF MORAL PANIC

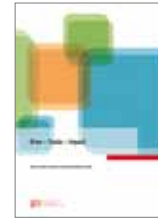
**SHORT STORIES** 14 stories that don’t hold back. Amanda Lee Koe is just 29, but in these stories, she describes wasted lives and unrequited love, as well as colonial heritage in the multiracial state of Singapore. These melancholy tales are close to the bone – but still sound utterly cool.

*Katharina Borchardt, literary critic and editor*

Amanda Lee Koe, Singapore  
Epigram Books, 216 pages



## GIZ PUBLICATIONS



### GROW – SCALE – IMPACT

Available in English  
Andrea A. Pérez Castro,  
Krisztina Tora

This guide explains how inclusive businesses – those that include people on particularly low incomes in value creation – can grow. Inclusive businesses play an important part in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.



### ICT4REFUGEES

Available in English  
Ben Mason,  
Dennis Buchmann

How can information and communications technology (ICT) help to support refugees and the host communities in which they now live? This question is the focus of a report that gives an overview of the actors involved, presents case studies, and analyses the findings of surveys carried out in Greece, Jordan and Turkey.



### A NEW DEAL FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Available in German  
Friederike Bauer, Marcel Seypel, Florian Ziegler

This publication, from the 'Materials on Development Financing' series, demonstrates why we need to manage energy better. The publication also explores how, through the work of GIZ and KfW Entwicklungsbank, German development cooperation promotes energy efficiency around the world.

These publications can be downloaded or ordered free of charge from [www.giz.de/publications](http://www.giz.de/publications)

A photograph of Natalija El Hage, a woman with short brown hair, wearing a green patterned blazer and a black skirt. She is smiling broadly and pointing with a red pen at a map on a wooden table. To her left, a man with glasses and a checkered shirt is looking at her. The background shows a wooden structure, possibly a staircase or a wall.

NATALIJA EL HAGE

## COUNTRY DIRECTOR

**SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA** was unknown to Natalija el Hage when she accepted the post of GIZ Country Director in Zambia. That kind of challenge is precisely one of the things she likes about working for GIZ, though. El Hage, who has a doctorate in psychology, has worked for the company since 1999: 'You can dare to jump in at the deep end,' she says. In her career with GIZ, El Hage has worked in the Human Resources Department and in the Philippines and Egypt. Before moving to Zambia, she was Country Director for Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon. She has settled quickly into her new base: she is very enthusiastic about her colleagues, and apart from that, 'the climate is perfect, the supermarkets have everything you want, and it's a great place to spend your leisure time.' El Hage and her husband are planning their first few short trips in the country. This time, though, her children have not come with her. Her 19-year-old son has already left home, and her 17-year-old daughters are staying in Germany to complete their secondary education. Achieving a balance between family and work means constantly finding new solutions: el Hage says that 'taking four or five weeks off in the summer is non-negotiable as far as I'm concerned.' For her, being a Country Director is primarily about 'leadership, management and perseverance. I'm really running a small business here.' The MBA that she studied for part-time while working for GIZ is a great help.

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# SUSTAINABILITY

A look back at a project and its results

PROJECT:  
REPATRIATION AND  
VOCATIONAL REINTEGRATION  
OF BOSNIAN WAR REFUGEES

COMMISSIONED BY:  
TOWN OF DÜREN

TERM:  
1998 TO 2003

**THEN:** In the late 1990s, large numbers of refugees were living in the town of Düren in the German federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia after fleeing their homes in Bosnia as a result of the war. Many were from Modriča. Once the war was over, they were keen to return home, but Modriča was now in the Republika Srpska, where Serbs made up the majority of the population. The municipal authorities in Düren therefore commissioned GIZ – at that time, still the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH – to create a temporary settlement in nearby Gradačac to give the people a new start. The project also included support with re-entering the local labour market.

**NOW:** Around 220 refugees accepted the offer and returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the Düren settlement in Gradačac, they moved into 50 small houses. The German town provided an initial grant of DM 1,200, and the government of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia added a further DM 650. The International Organization for Migration also supported the project. The German town of Düren funded the set-up of a carpentry workshop, where two returnees and two existing inhabitants of Gradačac found work. Other returnees found employment in agriculture or with local construction companies.

The returnees were able to use the settlement as a base for reorientation for five years before making way for further refugees. The initiative spawned a close town partnership between Düren and Gradačac, and there is still a lively exchange programme between schools, women's groups, and municipal councillors and officials.

## AKZENTE

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akzente has received several awards for its high-quality journalism and design. In 2016 it won the FOX Award in Gold and the FOX Visual Award in Silver.




## PREVIEW

akzente issue 2/17

AFRICA is a continent of contrasts. There is more poverty and hardship in Africa than anywhere else in the world, and many African countries face enormous challenges in tackling crisis and conflict. Yet Africa is transforming itself: economic growth is increasing, and the continent

has fertile soils, a wealth of natural resources and a young, flexible population. Can these two extremes be reconciled? And how can Africa's population of more than a billion catch up with the rest of the world? Answers to these and other questions will be provided in akzente 2/17.



The image features three yellow and black directional signs on wooden posts, set against a clear blue sky and a beach. The signs are arranged in a line from left to right, each pointing towards the right. The background is a vast, open landscape with a clear blue sky and a sandy beach in the foreground.

The international community has set crucial goals – and laid out a framework for achieving them with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. But can development succeed in times of crisis?

[akzente.giz.de/en](https://akzente.giz.de/en)

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