

**January 2023**

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Dear donors,  
dear members!

Great Britain is still groaning. In the last few months tens of thousands of Albanians have entered the country illegally. (Youth-)unemployment and fake news are fuelling

this wave of migration. Mainly young adults are leaving their home country. Nurses and orderlies emigrate to Germany, young men, among other countries, to Britain.

### **Albania: IPA's next step**

What does this mean for IPA? To what extent do our many school projects support the country if well-educated people leave their home country? On the one hand the answer should be that without education there is no development – and after all not everybody emigrates. But on the other hand we have to think ahead and plan the next steps if we still want to help the country sensibly and effectively. We are working on a programme for the advancement of the economy, the sponsoring of start-ups and already existing companies. This is hard work indeed. But it will be worth it if the scheme can be financed and accomplished.

Nicole Delavy  
Managing Director IPA

### **Congratulations!**



We congratulate the two members of the IPA Junior Team 2020/21, Charlize Micallef and Priyanka Safft Bhoyroo! As runners-up, they each received a certificate of recognition (as part of the Young Women in Public Affairs Award 2022) by the Zonta Club. They are honoured for their great commitment to the Junior Projects in Luzni and Hotesh (Northern Albania) which were realised in 2021. We hope the prize will open a door or two in their future lives. It will certainly remain a special memory, rounding off the impressions and experiences they gained with IPA.

### **Muhurr, North Albania / Zurich, Switzerland**

#### **“Better than the schools in the towns”**

**As soon as the smaller project of the junior team in Zogje was completed, the really big one (renovation of the two school buildings in Muhurr) was started – a bold venture for the youngsters in Zurich and, above all, for the teachers and students in Muhurr.**

The junior team had chosen two projects and had also been able to finance them. The construction of an ambulance station in Zogje had been completed at top speed in



*In renewed splendour: the high school in Muhurr*

spring (see Newsletter July 2022). Next, work on the two school buildings in Muhurr was started during the long summer holiday so as not to disturb any school lessons. The village is situated in the mountains of northern Albania, about half an hour away from Peshkopi. The workers were pressed for time. Nicole Delavy, the leader of junior teams, had commissioned twelve sub-projects to a construction company in the



*The kindergarten is fully equipped, too*

capital of the district. They all had to be tackled as soon as possible. There was a big lack of toilets in both buildings. The roof of the high school, a constructional defect, had been leaking for a long time. Lessons in natural or computer sciences and sports could hardly be taught without the neces-



*Before: wet walls instead of functioning PCs*

sary equipment or tools. In winter children and teenagers were cold, suffered from insanitation and were not well enough trained.

### **A tiring tour of inspection to Albania**

It was only a short journey to the Balkans, but it was exhausting. "It was just right, we would not have survived another day", said

Agatha at Tirana Airport after four days crammed with visiting the sites of projects and many new impressions. The highlight



*With a beamer: a big thank you for the juniors (front row, together with Nicole Delavy) in the PC-room*

was undoubtedly the inspection of their own projects in Zogje and Muhurr. On a rainy October morning the two IPA managing directors and the juniors drove across the old bridge into the village – "scary", they called the trip in their own language which this time was English. Inside the school they met 26 teachers who were obviously proud of their renovated and fully equipped buildings and extremely grateful for the extensive help



*A physics lesson is now interesting*

from Switzerland. During a long tour of inspection they showed us various classrooms, the kindergarten, the sports infrastructure, the computer room, the library

and the toilets. They also allowed us to follow a lesson for a short time. Ranging from the supervision of handicapped children to a physics lesson enhanced with demonstration materials and experiments – nothing could be compared to what the situation had been before. After a digital thank-you-message of a student in the new computer room the director said with a broad smile on her face: “Our school is now better than those in the towns.” It was a compliment for the juniors, their leader, the local IPA-partner and the building company. And it was clearly a promise to fully use the new possibilities for the benefit of a good schooling for the children and teenagers in Muhurr.

**Guirvidig, North Cameroon / Wohlen, Switzerland**

**Gender equality in education**

**2,560 pupils, but only nine classrooms. This bitter reality had serious consequences for the children in Guirvidig. And it was reason enough for a group of students at Wohlen high school to commit themselves to their education.**

A quick look at the statistics made it clear: Two thirds of the pupils in Guirvidig were boys. Although only 55% of the children living in the area went to school, there was still



*Unacceptable conditions inside the school*

not enough room for all of them at the primary school. Parents had to decide which of their children they wanted to send to school. Boys usually had priority and so thousands of girls were left out. On the other hand, what kind of education did they get? What can you learn when you are sitting on the floor, together with 140 other kids and without a book? The stench of bat guano was in the air and there were only six latrines. Inside the decayed buildings there were nei-

ther electricity nor teaching and learning materials, least of all a staffroom for the 18 teachers who had to teach in shifts.

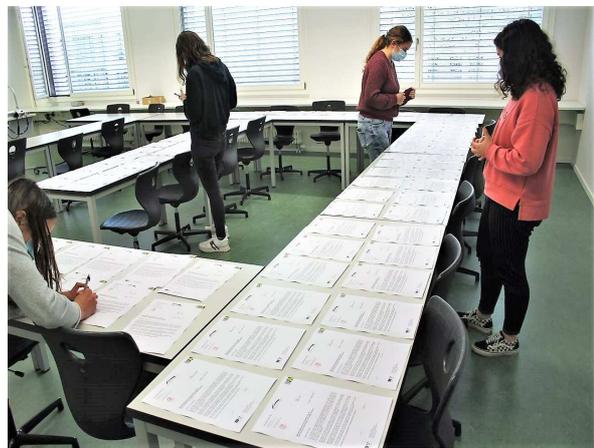
**Even a „media-appointee“ was needed**

The gap between Wohlen high school and the primary school in Guirvidig could not



*Making preparations for Valentine's Day*

have been wider. „I think that I have realised once more how privileged we are in Switzerland“, said Nina Käppeli after her cooperation with IPA. So one of the aims of the



*Posting letters is hard work!*

course had already been reached. But thanks to the commitment of the youngsters there were even more positive effects. Time



*An ideal school situation in the new building*

which had been lost because of the Corona home schooling could now be made up; the students worked every Thursday until 6 p.m.



*Further education courses for the teachers*

But nobody complained. „It was a phantastic term! We were a good group and we were all completely committed“, Chantal Wigger summed the situation up. It was like working in an open plan office. Each of them had his or her task. The reward they received came in the form of donations, the generous support of the county government and the acclaim of the media. The local newspaper



*Girls are fetching books for the lesson*

„Wohler Anzeiger“ published a series of articles so that a „media appointee“ had to be nominated. Their communication with the IPA partner in Cameroon ended up in a kind of cordial friendship. The IPA partner’s letters were addressed to „Mes très chères Jeannine et Meret“ („My very dear Jeannine and Meret“), and his personal e-mails gave the students in Wohlen an authentic insight into Cameroonian culture.

Meanwhile the world in Guirvidig has changed. Three new classrooms were built, two old buildings were renovated, and a decayed small house was turned into a staffroom and an office for the school director. There are solar energy, desks, chairs and teaching materials, and even workshops for teachers and parents’ associations were offered. And at long last girls have access to education – which is only fair!

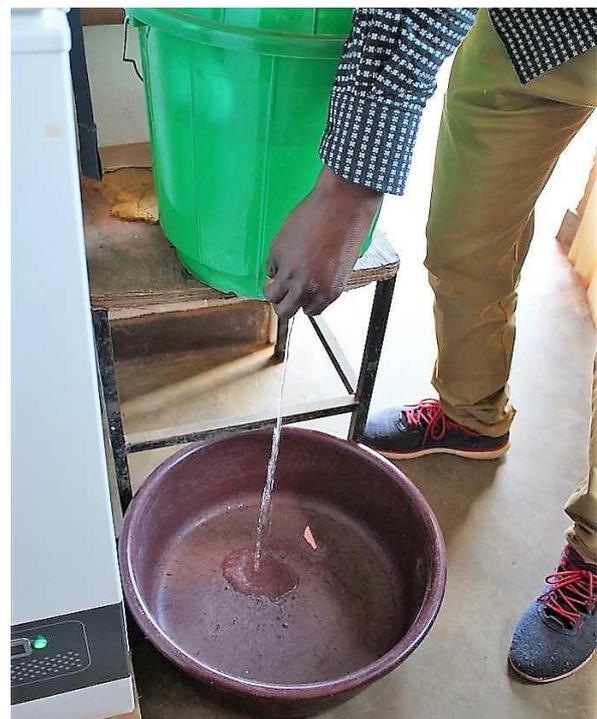
## **Zigodo, North Malawi / Horgen, Switzerland**

### **Necessity is the mother of invention**

**In the middle of the Corona pandemic a class at Horgen Secondary School dared to start a fairly big project in Malawi. Courage, creativity and hard work of the youngsters finally brought running water to the Eukweni Health Centre.**

The staff of the large medical station in Zigodo is responsible for 2,000 people in its catchment area. But until recently there was no running water in the main building. What was needed for the daily chores and the cleaning had to be fetched in buckets. What a loss of time and energy! The toilets were out of use. Doing the laundry, cleaning the building, even washing one’s hands regularly was a permanent problem. The health of both patients and staff was always at risk.

The students in Horgen did not want to accept this any longer. They planned a project for a solar-powered well which should provide the building with clean water. They also took on the idea brought up by the locals to install a water tap near the centre which would supply the nearby huts and families with drinking water.



*Water in a bucket inside a surgery*

## A smart IPA partner

On one hand there was a considerable budget, but on the other the pandemic had made the collecting of money with events



*The racing suit and the jersey have arrived*

impossible. What should the youngsters do? Necessity is the mother of invention, the proverb says, and it was obviously true for them. When they made a request to a Swiss top-ranking skier and an international ice-hockey player, both sent them a racing ski suit and a jersey. An auction on the internet – and they already had 800 Swiss Francs in their cash box. This motivated them even more. They sent begging letters to service clubs, churches and private people. IPA-UK also supported the project. But then an unexpected shock followed. The school authorities decided, due to the rising number of Corona cases, not to allow external per-



*A lively discussion preceding the choice of the project*

sons to enter the school buildings. Suddenly Pietro Tomasini, the project supervisor, was locked out. And so the new strategy was to finish all the preparation work for the project first and to postpone the interesting inputs to the final phase of the cooperation. And it worked! The class really managed to raise the necessary amount of money – in spite of all the difficulties.

In Zigodo there were hardships, too. But the proverb was also true there. Hundreds of families asked the authorities to install more



*The solar-powered water supply*

than only one water tap, but there was simply not enough money. Now the moment had come for the experienced IPA partner to step in. He cleverly bargained with the owner of the company for other taps. And the owner not only agreed, but also installed another two at his own expense. 2,300 litres of water per hour can now be tapped. The toilets in the medical centre were renovated, a shower and two additional latrines were installed. Six washbasins provide the rooms



*A positive side-effect: drinking water for families*

with clean water. You cannot really compare the present hygienic situation with what it was before. In Horgen and in Zigodo creative solutions were found to solve all the upcoming problems – for the people's benefit in Malawi and to the students' delight in Switzerland.

## The Interview

### “IPA has remained true to itself”

*You translate texts in four different languages. What is the fascination of this skill?*

Translating texts is a very creative activity. Translating a text from one language into another always challenges my fantasy and my creative power because languages are enormously diverse.

*What motivated you to translate important texts for IPA and to do it voluntarily?*

I wanted to do something positive, something more than just donating money. My command of several languages enables me to make my own contribution to the improvement of the world. This is my motivation. In Switzerland we live in paradise and so I would like to share this undeserved bliss, even if this is only a drop in the ocean.

*Are there any specific difficulties when you translate texts of NGOs?*

Yes, there are. Because many NGOs are internationally active there are, apart from the linguistic aspects, sociocultural ones to be considered as well. What may be taken for granted in an African country has to be explained in Europe. Another example are the different school systems which cause difficulties regarding vocabulary. There is no equivalent term for the German word “Gymnasium” in English (similar – but not equivalent - terms would be for example grammar school, high school or college).

*Which IPA-texts are particularly interesting for you?*

I like reading field reports. You always learn new things so that you begin to like the foreign countries and their natives. It also shows me that the problems we struggle with in Switzerland are in fact luxury problems.

*You have been working for IPA for a very long time. Have you noticed any changes in the development of the organisation?*

IPA has remained true to itself, it still focus-

es on education and medical care. But I have the impression that IPA has grown, it is now very active in a third project country (Malawi) and it seems that the number of projects is constantly increasing.

*How would you describe your cooperation with IPA?*

It is very pleasant and relaxed. We communicate in a friendly, respectful and professional way.



**Martin Fischer, 45**, lives with his girlfriend and two children on Lake Geneva. He works as a freelance translator and lector for various organisations and sometimes translates works of fiction. At present he spends most of his time doing domestic work and childcare.

## Preview of forthcoming IPA projects

### Vwawi Wankhama, North Malawi.

The present project class at Enge high school in Zurich chose a project in the field of food production. IPA first met the farmers in Vwawi Wankhama in 2015. Since then they have been waiting for a project to support them. Sometimes a lot of patience is needed until suitable sponsors are found, and moreover the pandemic caused delays. Now people in Vwawi Wankhama are enormously relieved that the times of hunger will soon be over.



### Seradounda, North Cameroon.

Another country, another field of action. Unlike the above mentioned Enge high school a class at MNG Zurich has decided to support the medical centre in Seradounda,



Cameroon. The students intend to renovate and to equip it, and to supply it with electricity and water. Moreover the staff shall profit from upgrade training courses.



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

**Would you like to support IPA-UK as a donor?**

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