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chances

The magazine that creates perspectives.

Entrepreneurship

Issue 02/2016

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on global prosperity
and the economy as
a protagonist
page 8



The great aim of education is
not knowledge but action.

Herbert Spencer (1820–1903)



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We believe

that the world would be a better place if all people had the same chances when it comes to education.

We think

that we should emphasise strengths and encourage talents.

We want

to give people space for personal development and to show them the possibilities when orientation is necessary.

Sustainability

is the root of business activity. Companies think about tomorrow and set the course for it today. Admittedly it does not offer a fast return on investment. But it is reliable, secure and sustainable.

The future belongs to people

who determine their lives independently and responsibly, who see the wider picture and who form their own opinion.

The future belongs to the companies

which recognise that their success rests on these people – now and in the future.

The Umdasch Foundation is an initiative of Hilde Umdasch and Alfred Umdasch which has been established with the goal of linking together the fields of education, economy and ethics. It supports projects within their companies, the Doka Group and the Umdasch Shopfitting Group. And it also supports initiatives which focus on the topics of education and knowledge transfer worldwide.

This magazine presents such initiatives. And people who are involved with their ideas and visions in a world which is changing fast. Who do so with confidence and courage – and not with pessimism and cynicism. And above all without moralising undertones.

This magazine targets employees, partners and customers – and people who combine business with values and who recognise knowledge as the biggest chance for our society.

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recognising chances

LEADING ARTICLE BY F. J. RADERMACHER

RESPONSIBLE
ENTRE-
PRENEUR-
SHIP
today...

Climate change, the world population explosion and the negative consequences of globalisation: our world is currently in a state of imbalance. Franz Josef Radermacher – Head of the Institute and Professor at Ulm University and a member of the Club of Rome – tells us how businessmen and companies can assume responsibility and create a future which is both positive and sustainable.



“The strongest actor on this Earth is probably business. Here in particular, mention should be made of larger companies and entrepreneurs, whose decisions have an important influence on the future.”

F. J. Radermacher

The world is currently in a state of imbalance. Problems are overwhelming us on all sides. While we talk about sustainable development, the processes worldwide are mostly moving forward in a very different direction. The world population is exploding; by the end of the century the population of Africa may have quadrupled to over four billion. Climate change is progressing apace and could make parts of the Earth uninhabitable. In the field of IT, artificial intelligence and the social media, processes of disruptive capitalism are taking place which could destabilise our society in many places. Under the pressure of globalisation and also of the waves of migration, the cohesion of the Western world is fading. We are observing processes of renationalisation and a democracy which is veering off in the direction of “bread and circuses”.

All of this is not a reason to despair; it is not a reason to give up hope of sustainable development. But it is an indication that worldwide development could also move in an unfavourable direction, even including the loss of a part of the progress our civilisation has made since the end of the Second World War, and which we have all long taken for granted. While the hopes of many are focused on the idea that the entire world is moving in the direction of prosperity, then it is also possible that conditions within the affluent society in Europe could deteriorate dramatically. The world could move towards a two-class society or a global collapse. People could be controlled by machines and live under conditions of “bread and circuses”, having largely lost their freedom to determine their political position.

In such a situation, where do the responsibilities for action lie? Of course international politics are still called for. But conditions will first have to continue to get much worse for something to happen there. Major change will only take place when the “bulldozers are in the living room”, and it may already be too late. That is how it could be in this case, even if it is by no means certain. At least since the World Financial Crisis we see progress with regard to the containment of tax havens and the stricter taxation of cross-border economic activity. That is some progress. However, politics alone cannot solve all the problems. It needs the support of enlightened citizens in all their many roles and activities, amongst them as consumers – and it needs the support of the economy.

The strongest actor on this Earth is probably business. Here in particular, mention should be made of larger companies and entrepreneurs, whose decisions have an important influence on the future. With regard to sustainability, the approaches vary widely. In the finance sector we often have to deal with “gamblers”, driven in some cases by greed on the one hand and panic on the other. Big capital corporations that operate on an international scale are strongly influenced by the capital markets. Small companies, especially those in a precarious financial position, have little room for manoeuvre. Of greater interest by comparison are efficient medium-sized companies, especially ones that are run by their owners, and in particular the ones that belong to the category “Hidden Champions”. These are companies that are often at the forefront in their markets worldwide, that plan for the long term, that cultivate a good relationship with their employees and the



communities in which they are located – companies for which an unhealthy obsession with profit is not the only aim and which prudently re-invest their profits time and again, in order to steer their companies into a positive direction for the future.

Such companies make an enormous contribution by offering employees a career perspective, paying taxes and incorporating a large number of partners and suppliers into their own economic activities and their own success. Entrepreneurs of this kind try to help wherever they see problems; wherever direct action is needed; and especially in situations where politics cannot act alone for understandable reasons.

Prof. Dr. Dr. Dr. h.c. F. J. Radermacher, President of the Research Institute for Application-Oriented Knowledge Processing (FAW/n) and Professor of Information Technology at the University of Ulm, President of the Senate of Economy e.V., Bonn, Vice-President of the Ökosoziales Forum Europa, Vienna and Member of the Club of Rome.

What is particularly important here is investment in education, both at home and throughout the world, as well as commitment in countries in which conditions are not easy. In addition there are also the necessary efforts to be made in order to stabilise the climate, for example by pursuing a policy of voluntary climate neutrality – above and beyond the legal regulations.

There is a trend today towards classifying activities of this nature under the heading of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). That is clearly a laudable approach, whereby we must also consider how we position Corporate Social Responsibility. Some see it in terms of a “win-win” approach in which a company can increase its own added value still further. However, this position is not tenable in many cases. In some situations it may be possible, at least in the short or medium term, to increase one’s own return by “plundering” the environment. That is not an effective strategy in the long term, but of course in the long term perhaps one will be dead or will have left the company and joined another one.

Nor is it the case that people have to allow themselves to be governed exclusively by the aim of increasing returns in all that they do. Indeed, on the contrary: there are people who do certain things because they think it is right. And sometimes they even do them only if they will not achieve additional returns by doing so, because they do not want to be governed in all matters by the expectation of a return. Whereby it is interesting to note that sometimes when we do something without the aim of its proving to be worthwhile, it may perhaps nonetheless turn out to be worthwhile, through an indirect feedback mechanism which was never intended in that form.

I am delighted that the Umdasch Group is demonstrating its commitment with its initiatives in the manner described. It is a successful company, and it operates for itself, for the region, its employees and global sustainability. It is not primarily driven by the aim to achieve returns. Accordingly the owners have founded an initiative which demonstrates commitment to the world’s future and especially towards education and young people. I am delighted that this focus exists; it is extremely important for our future. I wish the Umdasch Foundation and all its partners and all those involved continued success in all that they do.

“In line with Jean Amery’s conviction that ‘risk is the bow wave of success’ I see change as the only chance we have to change things for the better. Unlike most Austrians, it seems, I am not afraid of the possibility of change for the worse.”

DR. HELGA RABL-STADLER
President of the Salzburg Festival



© Salzburger Festspiele / Luigi Caputo

“When thinking and acting my focus is always on people. Together, we are permanently searching for new fields of business and new products for global distribution. Both passion for innovation and willingness to take risks have been guiding me all my lifetime.”

MAG. GEORG KAPSCH
President of the Federation of Austrian Industries,
Chief Executive Officer Kapsch Group



© Kapsch AG

Entrepreneurship, the;

We spoke to people from the worlds of business and society and asked them: “What do you understand by ‘Entrepreneurship’?”

(from French *entreprendre*, German *Unternehmertum*)
Meaning: The act of undertaking an enterprise or business, with the chance of profit or loss



ALFRED UMDASCH
Owner Umdasch Group

“For me as the owner of a family business, the securing of the financial basis of the company has always been – and always will be – of fundamental importance. However, globalisation and the continuous increase in digitalisation are resulting in a new and important challenge for entrepreneurs: information systems. It is to be expected that this will lead to major changes not only in the processing of information but also in the decision-making processes within companies. For us as an international company with customers in various countries and in companies of varying sizes, this will result in new demands being made. It is essential for the survival of our company that our market communication continues to be just as effective and successful despite the greatly changed information conditions.”

DORIS GLEISS
Employee Info Center Doka Group

“I carry out my job at Doka as if it were my own company – with regard to the care I exercise, and also the use of resources and, of course, the cost awareness. That applies to everything that I do.”



“To enjoy what you do, especially with a job like this one. I can’t say I’m doing it for the money, but rather because I like working with animals.”

MICHAEL WOLF
Fiacre driver in Vienna



IGOR BARULIN
Father of two and
commercial clerk
in Vienna

“In any case, enjoying one’s job. Always giving 100 %, in order to achieve the best results, so that the family can also live well from it.”



CURTAIN UP

for Michael Rodin-Lo

Michael Rodin-Lo (35) loves the stage. He was a boy chorister and founded MMIT in 2009. Last year he acquired an investor for the company. He tells us why. Curtain up!

The spaces in the Baroque basilica of the venerable Augustine Monastery of St. Florian are very imposing. Imposing and impressive. It is hard to imagine how a ten-year-old boarding-school pupil must feel here when he steps into the limelight in the footsteps of Anton Bruckner, the most famous protégé of St Florian's. Michael Rodin-Lo can, however. He enjoys talking about this period, which shaped his life. And he tells of the people who formed him there, who travelled the world with him and stood on the stage with him.

"The Boys' Choir had a tremendous influence on me. The choir director, the teachers and the entire environment are still very present in my thoughts", explains Michael Rodin-Lo. He appreciates the positive effects that this period had on his professional success. It was then, for example, that he lost his shyness with regard to performances on stage, which later proved very advantageous in his work. "Selling is like performing on the stage. In business the customers are my audience and either they applaud or they don't."

Courage, perseverance and a capacity for enthusiasm in order to enable the spark to cross over to the person you are speaking to – these are all qualities it takes both on the musical stage and in

your profession if you wish to shine. Not forgetting diligence and commitment. "To build up a company you have to be prepared to work night and day. And you must also be willing to pay heavily sometimes." It would not have been possible alone.

And so, looking back, it is clear how important it was for Rodin-Lo to have someone who acted as a companion on his journey. From the very beginning, for him that was his sparring partner and best friend Christian. They were at school together and later they also both studied Information Technology.

Now he also has a new sparring partner: since last year, the Umdasch Shopfitting Group is on board as the new owner. Through this step, his colleagues have increased in number many times over. And so have the opportunities. On both sides, incidentally.

So what does an international group of companies expect from the acquisition of a small technology concern like that? And how does the latter profit too? Andreas J. Ludwig, the spokesman for the board of the Umdasch Group, comments: "The reason why large companies acquire an interest in young companies, mostly start-ups, is easy to explain. It is a matter of new ideas and innovation,



which can rarely occur within the core business in companies with a long tradition in a product or a specific product category. Not because their own people are not capable of it. But rather because today the innovation is often so radical that it really shakes up the status quo, the accustomed product which has been perfected. Sometimes it is even disruptive; that is to say it simply overturns business models which have worked well for years and develops completely new ones. All this happens incredibly fast these days – people are simply bold enough not to cry after their ideas for evermore, but just put them into practice. And there is sufficient capital in the world for them to do that.

For us as a group of companies it is a successful way to approach the subject of innovation in this manner. We can think in completely new categories. I don't know whether a company whose business model consists of producing shopfitting could even have the idea of developing an interactive wall, with the help of which a store can dispense almost entirely with physical products – and thus manage without the shelves, hanging systems etc. that you need to store them. And it also seems unrealistic that a company that earns its money by renting out formwork might invent a sensor which establishes the earliest possible time for removing that formwork. But the fact is that these developments are taking place. The question is not whether they will happen, but who will be the first to have them.

In both companies we are pressing on energetically with this trend of enriching the company with external expertise and technologies because we are convinced that by doing so we are securing our sustainability in the long term. What is also sustainable is the win-win approach this contains, because the young companies which are joining us in this way also profit. For example from an organisation in which there are a large number of support specialists – for Marketing, Controlling or HR. And of course also from the luxury of not having to worry about their daily survival, at least for a while. One thing is essential in addition to all the advantages which result from an association of this kind: that the companies which join us in this way should retain their own culture. We are called upon to preserve them from too much integration into our structures and processes.”



Michael Rodin-Lo: “If Umdasch had not decided to invest in MMIT, I am sure we would still have existed in ten years. But we would only have been present on small stages. We would probably not have had access to the big ones – as we have already learned since we became part of the Umdasch Group. I see it as a decisive advantage of a healthy company that operates internationally, as

opposed to a young company, that it has the necessary foresight, the financial means, the resources in terms of staff and the global contacts. And so I feel that my decision was the correct one, also in view of this year's results. I feel that I have found the right partner with a large international stage.”

UMDASCH MMIT RETAIL

In July 2015 Umdasch Shopfitting Group acquired 100 % of the shares in the Digital Signage specialist MMIT, which specialises in electronic advertising and digital price labelling at the Point of Sale. Even before this date the two companies worked closely together. Since their merger via asset deal the new company Umdasch MMIT Retail has already implemented several major customer projects, including the electronic price labelling at Spar.



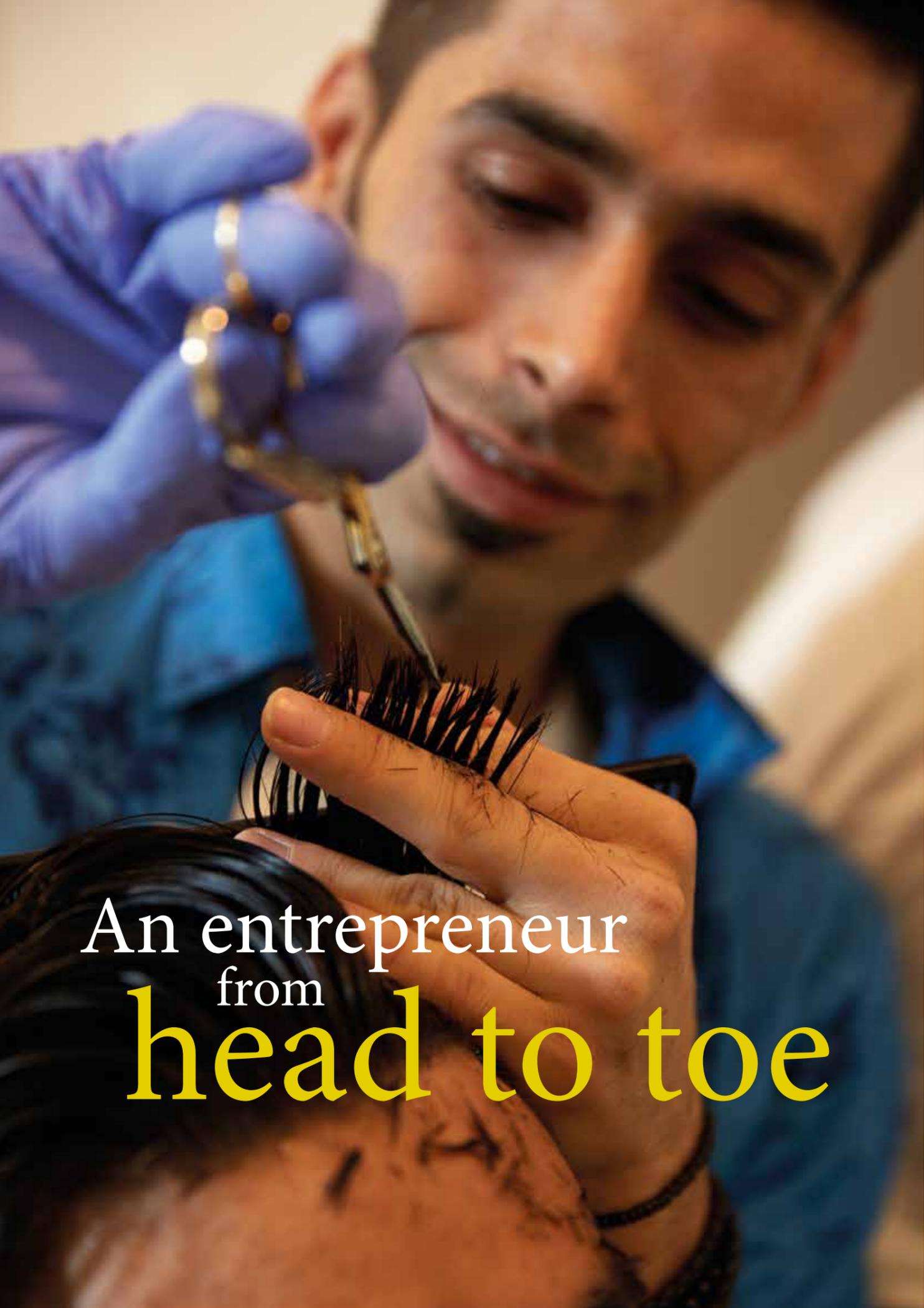
B | A | S RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY

The formwork subsidiary Doka Group has undergone a very similar development. Earlier this year the company took over the building process optimiser B|A|S, which specialises in concrete technology and which has a staff of approximately 40 employees. The two companies had also cooperated successfully for many years previously.

B|A|S profits from the worldwide sales network of the Doka Group and from its positioning as a reliable construction specialist. The Doka Group in turn has also enlarged its portfolio by a skill which is becoming increasingly important in the construction sector, namely the question as to how in future it will be possible to build even faster and more economically while saving more resources at the same time



creating chances



An entrepreneur from head to toe

PORTRAIT

Hadi Mirzaei (26) was a well-known hairdresser and a successful businessman in Iraq. Today he lives in Vienna as a refugee. One haircut at a time he is working towards his dream of owning his own hairdressing salon in Austria.

He told us his story.



A long, dark corridor leads to room 538. There are no pictures on the walls; the bare white surfaces are interrupted only by dark brown metal doors to left and right leading to the numerous living spaces. At first sight room 538 does not seem very different from all the others. But as we approach the electric hum of a razor becomes louder. Above the open door hangs a DIN-A4 notice on which the word “Hairdresser” stands in Arabic, English and German.

Master hairdresser Hadi Mirzaei is a fashionably dressed young man. He is attending to a customer in Erdberg refugee centre when we meet him at 11 a.m. for an interview. His scissors slip rapidly through the damp black hair of 20-year-old Abbas Jafri from Afghanistan, which Hadi Mirzaei then shaves off at the sides. He works conscientiously, his eyes never leaving his customer's head, and he corrects his work several times. He is not satisfied until every strand has been trimmed to the last millimetre. He explains his credo: that it is a mark of a good hairdressing salon

that the owner is satisfied. He smiles: “If you do your job well, the customers will be happy too,” he points out. Hadi Mirzaei seems to fulfil this mission, because when Abbas Jafri gets up from the barber's chair after Mirzaei's work is complete he beams radiantly and proudly inspects his reflection from all sides.

It is not a matter of course that Hadi Mirzaei is able to pursue his profession here. When the 26-year-old Kurd left Erbil, a metropolis in northern Iraq with a population of a million almost a year ago, he was a well-known and successful hairdresser and businessman. In those days he was often still working at midnight in his shop, which he ran with two partners. He was known in Iraq for his own haircut – “The Flower” – inspired by Justin Bieber's hairstyle. Local television stations broadcast reports about him. Some customers even travelled for several hours in order to get their hair cut by Hadi Mirzaei. But he only tells you about that if you ask him – almost as if his success were embarrassing. Nor does he talk about the media reports as the highlight of his career to

date, but rather about “the first time I cut a woman’s hair.” It was a special moment and a dangerous deed, because in Iran – where Hadi Mirzaei grew up – women are forbidden by law to appear in public without a veil.

Cut. Today Hadi Mirzaei lives in Erdberg House in Vienna with some 600 refugees. He works in a room in the house which serves as a salon and which he shares with eight colleagues. Before the “salon” was set up four months ago in what was previously a broom cupboard, he cut his fellow residents’ hair free of charge in their own rooms. Then he appealed to those in charge: “Please, I am a hairdresser; I need somewhere where I can work.” The residents of Erdberg House then organised some of the furnishing for their “salon” themselves and constructed a hairdresser’s stand and a bench for waiting refugees as part of the “Social Furniture Project” (see the next article on p. 24).

Practice makes perfect... Hadi Mirzaei decided at the age of eight what he wanted to be when he grew up. “My friends wanted to be doctors, but I always said I wanted to be a hairdresser – that was

my aim,” he recalls. The idea was born to some extent from necessity. “There were no good hairdressers in my town. My hair always looked awful,” he explains. That was sufficient reason for Hadi Mirzaei to do things better and so, at the age of 19, he completed a one-year hairdressing apprenticeship in Iran.

Seven years have passed since then and a great deal has happened. As members of an Iranian opposition party, things became too dangerous for his family even in Iraq and they left the country. His mother fled to Budapest and his brother to Sweden. When the reprisals even for Hadi Mirzaei became progressively worse, he left as well. He travelled on foot for one month, reaching Austria via Turkey and Greece about 11 months ago.

But in spite of everything, Hadi Mirzaei has not forgotten his dream from former times. He is continuing to live it today. “I want to open a big salon, to found a famous brand and create a new style,” he says. And he works day by day towards making his dream come true – in Austria.





FURNITURE

with a perspective



On the ground floor of the refugee house in Erdberg there is a smell of fresh sawdust and you can hear the screeching of a circular saw. That is quite normal. For some months now, the residents in the home for refugees in Erdberg have been creating their own living space. They have been making furniture for the refugees' home in a specially equipped workshop – from tables and chairs to entire kitchens and even the furnishings for a hairdressing salon. (see the article p. 20 “An entrepreneur from top to toe”). The items are being made by the residents together with the designers of EOOS within the framework of the project “Social Furniture”, which was presented at the Architecture Biennale in Venice. The need is great, for the house in Erdberg currently provides a home for almost 600 refugees. And the interest continues unabated. There are even waiting lists for jobs in the workshop.

Today, 20-year-old Abbas Jafri, a former hotel employee from Afghanistan, and 26-year-old Hamed Ebadellahi, an Iranian civil en-

gineer, have been lucky enough to get a place. They are not working here for the first time. With concentration and remarkable speed they mount the table legs onto the table top with a few practised movements. They are supported by Jakob Schwarz of EOOS, who is in charge of the project on the spot. “It is question here of much more than just furniture. The project gives the house a sense of identity and gives the people back their autonomy. In each corner of the house there is Social Furniture, and the residents can see that they have helped to build it”, he explains.

In addition to urgently needed furniture, above all the project “Social Furniture” is creating perspectives for the refugees as well as facilitating integration. It is also designed to arouse the interest of young people in woodworking trades and professions such as furniture technology or architecture. The project has been made possible by the Umdasch Foundation, which supplies Doka Formwork sheets free of charge. During the first year 2,000 m² of sheeting were processed.



© Paul Kanatler/EOOS_social_furniture



The (building) material of which sustainability is made

What do Nripal Adhikary, a Nepalese architect, and Peter Aigenbauer, an Austrian civil engineer, have in common? – Their commitment to alternative building materials. And the BASEhabitat project, which brings together interested persons from all over the world in order to develop together the future of sustainable building.



“Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development, including adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements.”

(UN Habitat Agenda, chapter 1)

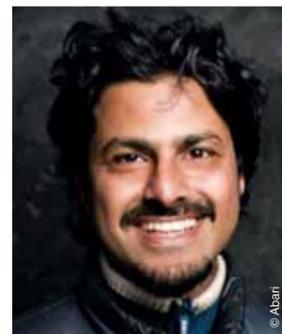


Austria acted as host to the world at the summer school of the BASEhabitat project of the University of Art and Design Linz. Participants from 40 different countries met in July in Altmünster at the foot of the Traunsee, in order to learn more about sustainable construction methods, to exchange ideas and to experiment with new or largely neglected building materials. Among them were Nripal Adhikary and Peter Aigenbauer, who both aim to pass on this knowledge to colleagues within their own organisation and to those in their vicinity.

The motivation of the participants was as diverse as their native languages – from Bengali and Swahili to French and German. Many of them had interests beyond that of developing a construction method which is easy on resources for both people and the environment: personal interests that arose as the result of fateful events such as natural disasters; or the opportunity of being able to bring about change in the sense of sustainable entrepreneurship and raising topics that are relevant for the future within an organisation that thinks about the long term. What they all had in common, however, was the idea and an interest in the subject

and in an exchange of knowledge and experience. And all the participants brought knowledge with them from their home country: Josef Mari from the Philippines, Kamyar from Iran, Jihene and Garance from France and Augustina from Argentina. They rolled up their sleeves every day and built things and experimented with ecological building materials such as clay and bamboo. Theory and praxis were linked together in four practical workshops and various buildings were erected.

Nripal Adhikary has already been involved with the summer school for over six years. He lives and works in Kathmandu and



has his own architect's office, ABARI, with eleven employees. What aroused his interest in this workshop and sustainable building methods? “My specialist knowledge is based on soil as a material; that is my great interest. Rammed earth is a traditional building technique back home in the

Himalaya, but unfortunately it is in decline. And it is precisely this that we want to change with our commitment. Since the last major earthquake, when all our buildings of rammed earth survived the destruction of the natural catastrophe, the population is very interested in this building technique once more. I should like to encourage this still further with my experience from the workshop. I shall be taking with me a great deal of new knowledge, many impressions and very valuable personal experiences which will help me in my work. I want to pass on this knowledge at home and to show how to build houses using regional materials.”



Peter Aigenbauer on the other hand has turned to regional techniques from personal conviction. He is a product manager for the formwork expert Doka and is interested in sustainable building materials and methods. Why? “Because I believe that in the long term, sustainable building methods



will prevail. I have already attended workshops in my free time and have implemented the first projects with sustainable materials like clay and bales of straw at home. Rammed earth cannot be implemented without formwork, so why shouldn't an international formwork company like Doka also build up its expertise in this field?"

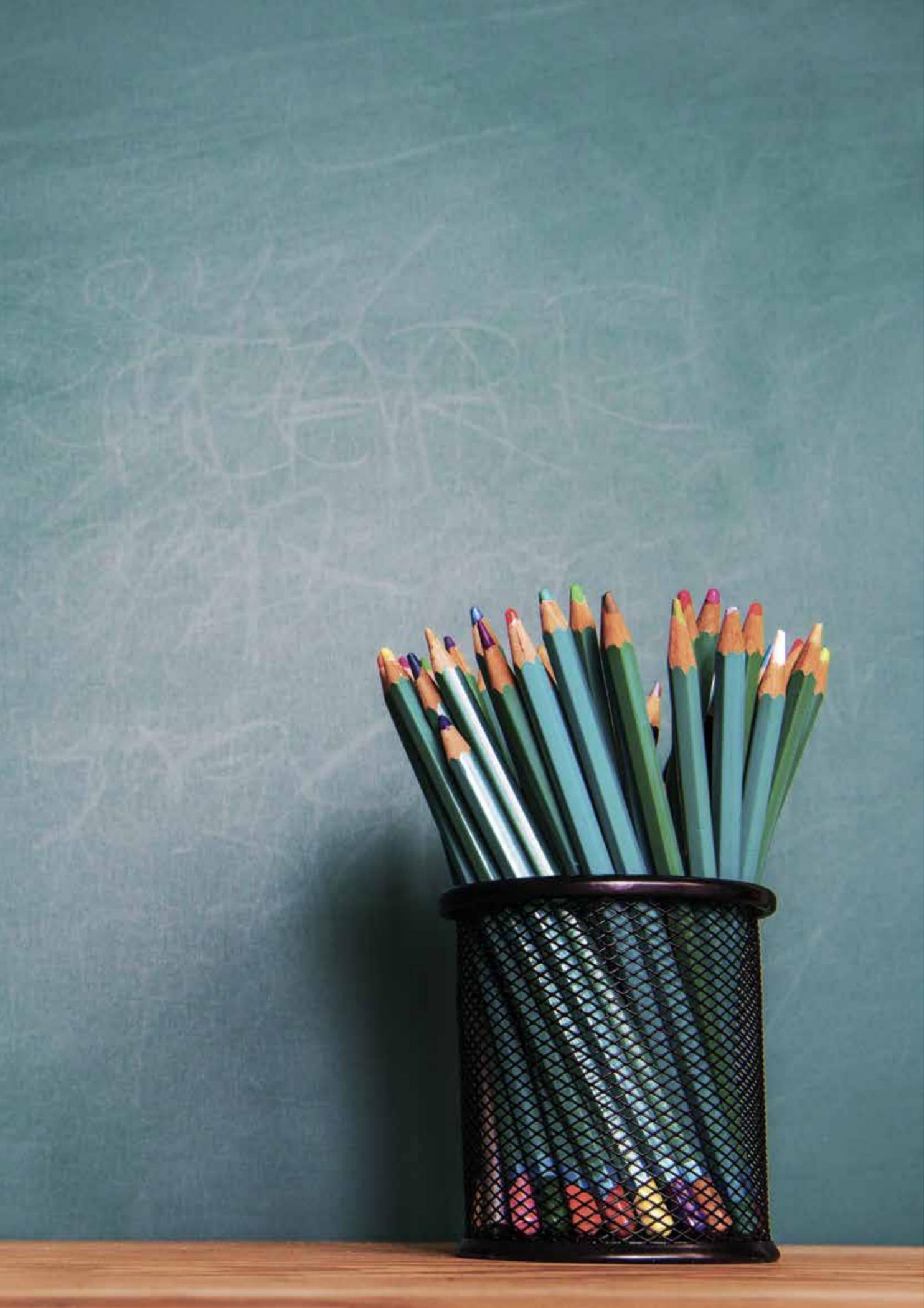
Peter Aigenbauer has also taken a great deal home with him from the summer school; for him, cooperation is the key to bringing about change. "We are facing unimaginably huge challenges on a world scale, as far as the growing population is concerned. We can only counter that with sustainable building, where an incredible amount of potential is lying dormant – for visionary and sustainably-thinking companies and society as a whole. But that will only work if we work at it together on a worldwide basis", commented Peter Aigenbauer in conclusion.

BASEhabitat relies on regionally available, renewable raw materials and develops traditional building techniques further. During the course of projects emphasis is placed on a local anchoring of expertise with a view to "helping people to help themselves".

BASEhabitat is a work studio founded by the University of Art and Design Linz and the Department of Architecture. Under the guidance of Prof. Roland Gnaiger, BASEhabitat is concerned about the subject of sustainable building with sustainable materials, especially clay. The member of the UNESCO Chair for Building with Clay offers international training and

further training courses, design projects and the building implementation. For some years Doka has supported BASEhabitat with formwork material for the summer school as well as for its projects. Now a joint cooperation has been started by the Research & Development department of Doka in order to bring formwork and building with clay even closer together.

The "Living Tebogo" daycare centre for disabled children in Johannesburg was created in a joint project together with students from BASEhabitat. The building materials came from the immediate vicinity of the building site: clay, air-dried concrete bricks, straw, wood and grass mats. The direct local sourcing strengthens the local economy and makes imitation possible.



enabling chances

Learning at 4,000 metres



A green board, crowded benches and teaching pictures on the walls. At first sight the classroom of the Rewa Buddhist Model Primary School looks much like any other. But for the 130 children who are taught here, this place will determine the direction their future will take. Because it is by no means a matter of course that they should be able to attend school here in the heart of the Himalaya.

This fact is not only due to the location of the primary school, which lies at an altitude of 4,000 metres in the Spiti Valley in India. The hostile mountains along the border between India and China are sparsely populated; there are very few houses here, let alone schools. The extreme climate also impedes the access to education. Because the winters in the Spiti Valley are long; the inhabitants are cut off from the outside world for almost six months of the year, since the routes into the surrounding region are impassable.

The biggest hurdle in the region, however, is the bitter poverty. The people who live here are mostly Tibetan refugees. Many parents simply cannot afford the school fees, especially not for their daughters, whose future they regard as secure, since they will marry one day. In order to provide them with an alternative to child labour and the chance of a self-determined future, the primary school focuses above all on girls, although boys are taught here too. They are all provided with hot meals, school books and accommodation free of charge. This is an enormous help for the

local population, who in some cases cannot even afford to buy firewood to heat their homes.

The school was built and opened in 2015 by the Indian NGO Rinchen Zanpo Society and the Lower Austria Tibetan Aid Organisation. The organisation's aim is to support education for children and young people – especially Tibetan refugees – in India and Nepal. The educational establishment is also supported by donations from private individuals and the Indian state.

From next year the school will be expanding further. In the spring construction will start on the Rewa Buddhist Model High School, which is being partly financed by the Umdasch Foundation. It will be the first secondary school in the region, thereby providing access to Indian universities – an important contribution to equal opportunity.

It was Ingomar Illetschko who proposed the idea of support to the Umdasch Foundation. The 45-year-old quality technician works in Austria for Doka and is also an active member of the Lower Austria Tibetan Aid Organisation. He informed the Umdasch Foundation of the planned construction of the high school, and since then has coordinated the help for the project. When asked what had prompted him to become involved, he explained: "If anything helps in the field, then it is education. So that everyone can make something of his or her life."

A TEMPORARY HOME

Fatima was forced to flee from the civil war in Somalia. Alone. Her husband was killed in the war. Fatima's pregnancy was well advanced when she landed in Italy by boat and eventually reached Austria, where her daughter Aya (1) was born. Against all the odds, today the 27-year-old refugee faces the future with optimism.



Almost all the parking spaces on the big car park in front of the former Doka premises in Vienna-Auhof are empty. Only a bright red Bobby car catches your eye immediately; it has been parked beside a small white vehicle bearing the logo: "Caritas&Du. Wir helfen" ("Caritas&You. Here to help").

Inside the building itself – a three-storey, sand-coloured prefabricated building – virtually nothing recalls its original purpose. Watercolours of flowers hang on the light yellow walls, and the space previously filled with desks and computers is occupied today by boxes, beds and toys. Children's laughter now echoes through the corridors, because since the spring this newly furnished emergency centre run by Caritas has provided a safe place for women and single mothers with children who fled to Austria from violence, war and terror. For women like Fatima the emergency centre means much more than just having a roof over their

head. For a total of 60 inhabitants it provides a home until the asylum proceedings have been completed: a place where they can stay until they are able to stand on their own feet once more. It has been made possible through the support of the Umdasch Foundation. After Doka Vienna had moved to a new location the building was empty and could be made available free of charge.

"A very special house"

The accommodation is, as Fayad Mulla-Khalil, the director of the emergency centre observes, "a very special house". Great emphasis is placed on the residents' independence. Thus, for example, the residents cook for themselves and look after a communal garden. The site also provides enough space for the children to play, and they can learn to ride bicycles outside too. "Here we can provide the residents with emergency accommodation which is unlike any other refugee centre I know of. For example, the fact that the

building is well equipped with kitchens means that it is possible for the residents to do their own cooking, thereby regaining a very important part of their daily lives", explains Fayad Mulla-Khalil.

For Fatima and her daughter Aya the time here will soon be coming to an end. She recently received a positive decision on her asylum application, so she is now looking for her own flat. She wants to learn German, begin a training course and embark on her future in Austria.

Samantha came to Austria with her mother and her older sister from Kenya. Most of all she likes playing with her red push car – one of the many toys and everyday items which were provided as a result of a collection organised by Umdasch staff.





reporting chances



1.

1. Small gifts with a big effect

Michael Arnold, Managing Director of Doka Gulf, was greeted by radiant, smiling children's faces when he visited an orphanage in Kenya, Africa. For some years now he has been supporting the Fahari Foundation, which takes care of the children who live there and gives them a chance to lead a more humane life. His luggage contained a large number of books, cuddly animals, games and craft items which were collected by the staff of Doka Gulf and given to the children.



2.

2. Good deeds

Oaza Studio – a not-for-profit organisation in Prague – was founded with the aim of helping children and young people with mental disabilities by revealing their talents and thereby supporting their social and professional integration. Doka Česká is a partner of the organisation. Staff members help where help is needed – for example, in the organisation of courses and events.



3.

3. Packages for a successful start at school

Attending school is particularly important for the successful and rapid integration of refugee children and their families. The help organisation CARE assists refugee families in Austria when children start school by providing them with starting packages, because starting school is expensive and represents a huge challenge for the families. So far a total of 1,508 children have received urgently-needed packages before starting school. The Umdasch Foundation also supports this campaign.



4.

4. A helping hand for a good cause

With the sale of second-hand articles and food packages donated by supermarkets at favourable conditions, the SOMA social market in Amstetten supports people with low incomes as well as providing the long-term unemployed with a place for exchange. The Umdasch Shopfitting Group not only supplied the market with new shelving; for one day, staff members rolled up their sleeves and took on the role of sales staff.



5.

5. Career Moves

Everyone is entitled to a chance on the job market, including people with disabilities. The Austrian initiative Career Moves supports precisely this section of the population in their search for suitable jobs. The online job portal links companies and employees with disabilities. It was founded by Gregor Demblin, who is a paraplegic himself following a bathing accident. People searching for jobs can post their profile on the platform: the emphasis is on their experience and achievements, not their disability. Career Moves also serves as a contact point for employers and advises them on the subject of work and disability.



6.



7.

6. Fulfilling Dreams with Ethical Investment

The idea of owning their own shop or acquiring a new agricultural machine often remains no more than a dream for a large section of the population in developing and emerging countries, since in economically weak regions in particular, people are often unable to take out a loan because they are unable to offer any security. The development cooperative Oikocredit refinances microcredit programmes and projects, thereby providing disadvantaged and low-income people with access to financial services and improving their living conditions. The loans are granted in Asia, Africa, Latin America and South-Eastern Europe and are made available by some 51,000 private individuals and organisations.

7. Education by Post

The Deutsche Post DHL Group has set its sights on supporting young people from socially disadvantaged sectors on their educational path and improving their career chances with the programme Go Teach. Here the company works together closely with SOS Children's Villages and the educational initiative Teach For All, which operates worldwide for more equality in education. Members of the company are involved on a voluntary basis, providing insight into their working lives and sharing their own experiences with the young people.



8.

8. Creating Perspectives

The integration of refugees is one of the most important tasks of society as a whole today. With an extensive programme of activities, the Bayer Concern assists refugees and supports young refugees in particular so that they can establish themselves in modern working life. They can improve their language skills and are given a first career orientation during two course programmes in Leverkusen and Berlin. But the company also supports employees who become involved with established aid organisations and grants them up to eight days of paid leave from their normal work so that they can carry out this project.

“Entrepreneurship means also investing in the future and thus in the people who will shape the world of tomorrow.”

Hilde Umdasch

