



Focus on Sustainability

Social sabbatical

The new way in human resources

Founded in 2011 and based in Haslach near Freiburg, Manager für Menschen specialises in a different kind of matchmaking: top managers willing to take a sabbatical while achieving something positive and rewarding are placed as advisors in less privileged regions around the world, where support and knowledge is urgently needed.

TEXT: TINA AWTANI | PHOTOS: MANAGER FÜR MENSCHEN

Social sabbatical is the term to bear in mind for highly skilled professionals, corporations and international help organisations alike. "Manager für Menschen places executives for a limited time in social projects, giving them the opportunity to make the most of a sabbatical. For companies we offer innovative sabbatical and career development solutions, while organisations benefit from a flexible pool of highly qualified and interim-advisors," says Elke Dieterich, founder and managing director.

Organisations the company teams up with are based in countries like Cambodia, Tanzania or Namibia and, unlike in a volunteer

or help programme, an eye-to-eye level partnership is established, where both sides learn and benefit from each other. It is a win-win situation, which leads to long-term improvement for everyone involved. Dieterich or members of her team have visited many of the international projects in person and she is proud of the long-term co-operations that have been established. "Today I combine my social engagement with my passion for travel and the interest in foreign cultures. I turned my passion into a profession," she admits.

Going abroad, while doing some good, is easier than one would expect as Man-

Main image: Community projects in Cambodia with interim-advisor Jochen Wild.

Above: Master plan development and management consultancy of a township project in South Africa with interim-advisor Joachim Mayer. (left)

Consulting of an AIDS-orphans-project in Tanzania with Elke Dieterich. (middle)

School project in India with interim-advisor Annelie Müller. (right)

Portrait: Elke Dieterich, founder and managing director

ager für Menschen offers comprehensive introduction and preparation. "Detailed destination country information, check-lists and guidelines as well as a one and a half day workshop are all part of the preparation process," Dieterich explains. Those who took the plunge have nothing but positive words for their experience. 'This was one of the best experiences I ever had in my life' is just one of the quotes returning executives describe their adventure with. The list of projects Manager für Menschen offers is constantly growing and so is the demand for social sabbaticals. Topics like awareness, resilience and self-guidance are currently further developed as part of the leadership programmes and 2015 brings exciting news. "Together with an expert we now offer a unique combination in the area of Social Sabbatical-Outplacement," Dieterich reveals.

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