

# Structure and pedagogical concept of the South-North voluntary service programme of KURVE Wustrow – Centre for Training and Networking in Nonviolent Action e.V.

## General Information about the terms used in this document:

**Sending organization (SO)** = Mittidhan Charitable Trust

**Host organization (HO)** = KURVE Wustrow

**Places of Assignment (PoA)** = The various organizations, in which the volunteers will do their voluntary service

To follow the nomenclature used by the BMZ, the concept of global North and South was used when referring to the program participants in this document. The volunteers from India are referred to as **South-North-volunteers** and the volunteers from Germany are referred to as **North-South-volunteers**.

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## **The Reverse Group of KURVE Wustrow**

The *Reverse Group* of *KURVE Wustrow* consists of former volunteers who completed their international voluntary service with the *KURVE Wustrow* during the last years. KURVE Wustrow has been supporting its former volunteers for several years in their pursuit to develop and implement returnee projects – with an exchange-programme having been planned for a while. Our decision to get together as the Reverse working group of KURVE Wustrow originated from the wish to become involved in KURVE Wustrow and thus to support the South-North exchange. We would like to use our motivation and experience to help young individuals from our partner countries to participate in a voluntary service abroad similar to the one we completed. In this endeavour the Reverse group conceptualizes, organizes and implements a large part of the South-North voluntary service programme voluntarily (but in close cooperation with staff of KURVE Wustrow).

More former volunteers from future generations are invited into the Reverse group to ensure a continuous implementation of the programme.

Against this background, the Reverse group strives to achieve the following aims for the South-North exchange:

- Contributing to a peaceful and just world and to understanding among people by involving volunteers socially, politically and culturally and by enabling exchange;
- Developing space for shared learning between volunteers and the organizations involved, especially with regard to sustainable development as well as societal and development-political issues;
- To offer experiences and opportunities to the volunteers which in turn will create motivation for civil engagement in their home country;
- To raise awareness among all involved parties concerning global and historical interdependencies, especially in the context of post-colonialism;

- To reduce educational privileges of the Global North and to work towards greater equal opportunities.

## Cooperation between Sending Organization, Reverse group and Host Organization

The Reverse group aims to implement the South-North voluntary service in close cooperation with one or several Sending Organizations which take on responsibility for its implementation and which actively co-design the programme. Current or former North-South Host Organizations are likely candidates for this cooperation.

In the long run, this pedagogical concept will be developed and agreed to by both Sending and Host Organization as well as the German Reverse group and an Indian Reverse group (still to be founded).

## Selection of the volunteers

After consultation with all partners involved and with consideration of the guidelines of the BMZ we have developed a volunteer profile for candidate selection, which should ensure a successful stay and exchange.

### The volunteers should:

- Be between 18-28 years old;
- Have graduated high school, reached a similar level of education or be personally qualified for a voluntary service in some other way;
- Be able to cope with the general challenges of an extended stay abroad. The Sending organizations should evaluate this ability in a personal meeting;
- Be willing to learn German prior to and during their voluntary service. Furthermore it would be desirable that the individual have at least basic knowledge of the English language as this would help communicating in the beginning and also make the process of learning German easier. Also, the main language in the seminars is probably going to English;
- Have a basic interest in politics and sustainability, and be conscious about globalization-related issues and the desire to work towards social change;
- Be able to learn informally and understand the opportunity to learn about another culture provided by this program. Therefore they should have an interest in the type of work the host organization is doing and be motivated to support it;
- Show tolerance towards other cultures as well as a willingness to understand and integrate themselves into a different one. To support a successful exchange they should be open to sharing their own culture and reflect upon their experiences.
- *Places of assignment may have further requirements and/or wishes that should be considered while selecting and especially while placing. These are spelt out in each placement description.*

The Reverse Group of KURVE Wustrow will work closely with the sending organizations during the development and implementation of the volunteer selection procedure. We would like to emphasize that, based on a trustful and transparent relationship, the sending organizations will have the main responsibility for the selection of the

volunteers. Nevertheless *KURVE Wustrow* will gladly help and assist should any problems arise.

A fair and transparent selection procedure is expected from both sending organizations. This means that there cannot be any discrimination based on the applicant's gender or origin etc.

*KURVE Wustrow* proposes the following procedure: After a written application (at least partly in English) promising applicants should be invited to a small orientation seminar. This will allow them to meet the applicants in person (for more details see: "Seminars in the home country") and for the applicants to understand details of as well as rights and responsibilities coming with the voluntary service programme. The final placement decision will be made by the sending organizations, in consultation with the host organization and Place of Assignment.

### **Selection of the Places of Assignment**

As former North-South volunteers, the Reverse group has experienced advantages and disadvantages in their own Places of Assignments (PoA). Based on this, we have developed a profile for PoAs together with *KURVE Wustrow*, which we hope will provide a suitable context for South-North volunteers to experience a successful and enriching voluntary service.

PoAs should:

- Have previous experience with (german or international) volunteers – if possible;
- Bring awareness or at least be open to exchange about issues like gender, sustainable development, "critical whiteness";
- Support a readiness to learn "interculturally" and an awareness for the special challenges and needs of international volunteers in their staff;
- View a voluntary service as a learning service and be suitable to conduct this.

Besides being HO, *KURVE Wustrow* is a Place of Assignment for two volunteers.

Additional PoAs are being offered and searched for continuously, so that they, too, can be evaluated for suitability and integrated into the programme. Detailed descriptions of current PoAs can be found in the "Placement descriptions" for the respective year.

### **Linking the South-North- and North-South-volunteers**

Given that the *Reverse Group Germany* consists mainly of former volunteers and is primarily responsible for the organization of the South-North-exchange, connections and contacts for the volunteers will be made early. In addition to the organization of the exchange the contact between volunteers of different "generations" (alumni, active volunteers, future volunteers) should be established the following way:

- To make settling in easier and allow us to share our experiences with the participants a "On-Arrival-Training" welcoming seminar will be organized with the *Reverse Group* directly after the arrival of the South-North volunteers in Germany;
- Invitation to the South-North volunteers for recreational or extracurricular activities (e.g. visit or spend the holidays with a volunteer);
- Possibly: participation of the South-North volunteers in the departure seminars of the future North-South volunteers and vice versa. This allows for information

and experience to be shared between North-South and South-North volunteers and between different batches;

- Another option is to establish language tandems before the voluntary service starts to make learning the new language.

## Design of the seminars

### Seminars in the home country

During the last years, Orientation day, Predeparture and Returnee seminar have been facilitated by the *Reverse Group India*, and taken place in the Sending organization. In this way, the transfer of knowledge between former and future volunteers can be ensured and networks can be build.

#### Overview:

Seminar	Length	When	Where
Orientation day	1 day	Prior to selection	At one HO
Predeparture seminar	Appr. 3 days	in the month before departure	At one HO
Returnee seminar	Appr. 2 days	directly after returning	At one HO

### Aims and contents of the seminars in the home country

#### Orientation day

The orientation day is part of the selection process. This should happen with 2-3 applicants per PoA, which seem suitable based on their previously handed in written application (in English).

Here,

- The SO can get to know the applicants and can estimate their motivation and suitability for the voluntary service;
- The potential volunteers learn about the meaning and responsibilities as well as legal and financial aspects of the voluntary service;
- KURVE Wustrow and the PoAs will be presented.

More details can be found in the document "Partnership Agreement\_Attachment 2\_selection and placement\_2016.pdf".

#### Predeparture Seminar

The predeparture seminar should prepare the volunteers for their stay in Germany and for being a longterm volunteer.

Proposed Contents:

- Attunement to the voluntary service (speaking about expectations, hopes and fears of the volunteers);
- meaning and consequences of a voluntary service abroad;

- aims and expectations of the sending and host organization and the places of assignment, formulating personal aims of the volunteers for their service;
- reflection on the volunteer's personal identity, how the environment and surroundings have an impact on identity;
- historical relation between the home and host country , issues of globalization, international correlations and racism;
- basic information (mainly technical: climate, rules etc.) about Germany;
- strategies to deal with problems that may occur;
- contact between current and former South-North and North-South volunteers;
- organisational questions.

### *Returnee seminar*

The returnee seminar should help the volunteers readjust back in their homecountry.

Proposed Contents:

- exchange with other volunteers about experiences during the service;
- evaluation of the service and personal conclusions;
- experiences after returning home and how to deal with potential problems with readjusting;
- reflection of their perception of their home country after being able to see it from a distance and thinking about it in a global context;
- ways to incorporate the acquired experiences and knowledge into their everyday life;
- further civic commitment;
- contact between former South-North volunteers;
- feedback to the Sending and Host organization, Place of Assignment and mentors.

Generally, all (potential) Sending Organizations have structures in place to host seminars. There is competent staff to facilitate seminars as well as international volunteers to support these. If needed, *KURVE Wustrow* can assist the sending organizations in preparing and organizing the seminars.

### **Seminars in Germany (at least 25 days)**

**Overview:**

<b>Seminar</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Where</b>
Orientation and On-Arrival	5 days	Directly after arrival	Host organization
Midterm	4-5 days	4-6 months after arrival	Neutral location
BFD	5 days	Within the year	BFD seminar house
Completion	3 days	Shortly before departure	Host organization

further seminar days	8 days	During the year	variable
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## Aims and contents of the seminars in Germany

### *Orientation and On-Arrival Seminar:*

The Orientation and On-Arrival seminar is designed to help the volunteers when they arrive in Germany.

It serves for the HO to get to know the volunteers, to accompany them in their first experiences in Germany so that they feel welcome and supported and learn that they can trust their contact people and mentors.

During the orientation, which happens in the location of the PoA, practical questions of day-to-day life are being tackled (e.g. registration in Germany, opening a bank account, purchasing a bahncard, ...).

Afterwards, the On-Arrival seminar is being conducted for all volunteers together. Here, the arrival, expectations and fears, aims of the volunteers and other things can be discussed.

Afterwards, a language course can be visited in a block training or ongoing for several months.

Proposed Contents:

- welcome;
- get to know of Host organization and possibly other volunteers;
- orientation and practical questions of everyday life;
- expectations and fears;
- developement of personal goals;
- support in orientation in new surrounding & with new behaviours;
- if applicable: dealing with problems and conflicts (personal, work,...);
- discuss feeling foreign and what it means to have a "home".

### *Midterm seminar*

The midterm seminar should give volunteers a neutral space to reflect on previous and future situations. Preferably, there is someone from India present (for logistic and financial reasons most likely someone living in Germany).

Proposed Contents:

- review of the original expectations, fears and goals;
- make connections between own experiences and global context, integrating experiences and larger contexts of nonviolent action and civil engagement;
- reflection of position and self-concept as a volunteer and as an individual in Germany, challenging perceptions, learning from encounters;
- discuss subjects that move the volunteers (e.g. racism, gender, alienation from family and home);
- tackling specific problems: dealing with conflicts (personal, work,...), "self-management", design of life and work situation;

- interim evaluation of the voluntary service and prospect of the future part of the service and the time afterwards.

### **Completion seminar**

The completion seminar should give room for reflection, evaluation and preparation for returning.

Proposed Contents:

- joint farewell with all those involved in the programme in Germany;
- reflection upon and evaluation of service;
- feedback concerning suitability of PoA, organisational issues and accompaniment during the service (so that these can be improved and adapted);
- preparation for returning to home country: discuss possible problems and conflicts and develop strategies to deal with these;
- collect ideas for future civil commitment in their home country and in the Reverse group.

### **Other ways to support the volunteers during their stay:**

- The other eight seminar days will be organized depending on the volunteers' interest: there will be the possibility to choose between international trainings with *KURVE Wustrow* or other organizations or the planning and execution of a social project with the former volunteers of the *Reverse Group*;
- Mentors support the volunteers in settling in in their new surroundings and are ready to answer questions concerning non-voluntary service issues as well as when difficulties with the PoA arise;
- Where possible, we aim to place the volunteers in host families or shared flats for better integration into the community;
- The volunteers will have one tutor in SO, HO and PoA: there should be regular contact with them before and during the voluntary service, furthermore they should discuss and define "common aims" for the voluntary service at the beginning. They should then pursue and adapt these throughout the voluntary service;
- The volunteers will write 3 reports during their voluntary service, as it is common for the North-South volunteers;

For more personal and pedagogic support, also see the section on "Linking the South-North- and North-South-volunteers".