

Social Engagement

Vacationing in Balinese classrooms

Aug 09, 2019 | CM - Communications | Helmut Bresler



Group photo on Bali: Corinna-Rosa Hacker (center) with the schoolchildren.

I watch the pale yellow sun rise from behind the nearby tropical forest. My name is Corinna-Rosa Hacker, and I am currently staying among the rice-paddies north of the Balinese hill town of Ubud. In order to get from my lodgings with a Balinese family to the center of the town I have to negotiate a narrow footpath bordered on the left and right by rice fields.

Does it work without local contacts?

I soon round the last corner and catch sight of my local cooperation partner Gusti. Over recent years she has become a friend whom I value very much. She provides local knowledge and links to contacts in the area, without which I would be unable to carry out my projects in Indonesia. We embrace before, equipped with a writing pad and pen, we talk over our plans for the day. Stacked in the corner beside us are hundreds of schoolbooks and a number of computers which we have purchased in Denpasar, Bali's capital, over the last few days.

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What is today's objective?

A couple of hours later, our car turns off onto an unpaved side-road in the north of Bali. Our destination today is one of the schools where we will be continuing our work of setting up school libraries. "Look at them!" Gusti calls out suddenly with delight. We can see 30 or so children happily approaching us. They accompany us up to the entrance, where we meet the school's director, some parents and many other pupils who are waiting for us. This school too has more than 180 children on its roll. We get out of the car and are immediately enthusiastically surrounded.



The children learn that the new computers will be arriving today.

Boundless anticipation

A little later we are sitting in a room containing a wooden table and a number of chairs, but no air-conditioning. The windows and the door to the schoolyard are open, providing a slight breeze, which cools me down a little. Countless young eyes observe me attentively through the windows and doors. They know that Gusti and I have come here to give them something. They are aware that they will be receiving books and computers, and the eager anticipation in their eyes is so wonderfully candid. First, though, there are some administrative matters to be dealt with.



Poverty has many facets

Poverty can also mean having access to opportunities, or none at all. Here I work exclusively with those schools from such humble circumstances that access to education is difficult or impossible for the majority of pupils from families that earn only 80 to 100 euros per month at their farming families who live in simple rice fields, mostly without electricity. Food is cooked over open fires, and in an adjacent room. The schools are the only source of education.


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Unpacking the new books.

What are we looking to achieve?

On Bali, my aim is to achieve the greatest possible benefit 'on the ground' with the donated money entrusted to me. Every euro in donations received by our Munich-based charity goes directly to our educational projects. Those of us who work with 'Stella Bildung Bewegt e.V.' are delighted by every donation that comes in, and it is our aspiration to turn the donated funds into worthwhile material benefits in a responsible manner. Everything we receive and spend is now meticulously recorded in the school director's ledger, and endorsed with a special government stamp.

Happy children?

A short time later, some of the schoolchildren stream into the room. Thrilled and delighted, each child chooses the book that most appeals to them. The books are in two languages, Bahasa and English, and explain, in a fun way, about current topics like environmental pollution, animal conservation or the economic cycle. I think back to when I was a little girl, when books fired my imagination and my vision of the world.



Everyone is curious about the arrival of the computers.

Taking stock

Providing inspiration, perhaps giving the children fresh ideas for their lives and creating a place where the youngsters can get together to be able to immerse themselves in the magic of knowledge, fills me with a profound feeling of gratitude. Gratitude for the fact that I have such understanding employers, who allow me to take my annual leave in a single block. Gratitude that we have been able to attract so much in donations over recent years, in order to be able to realize more and more projects of this kind. And gratitude that each of us has the capacity to scatter a little magic. It is good that we constantly remind ourselves of this.

Seeing the world through different eyes

I spend a great deal of my annual leave carrying out voluntary work on educational projects conducted by the Munich-based charity 'Stella Bildung Bewegt e.V.'. In my professional life I work as an M&A project manager for the Strategic Company 'Siemens Mobility', when my everyday activities are characterized by speed of action, analytical thinking, decisiveness and negotiating skills. And however much I enjoy dealing with mental and intellectual business topics, it does me just as much good to tackle "simple" practical things during my vacation time. This change of environment, from corporate desk to the tropics and the

establishing of libraries, allows me to clear my mind of old thoughts, create spiritual headspace and reawaken my creativity. Ultimately this benefits my work too, for example when tackling tricky topics.



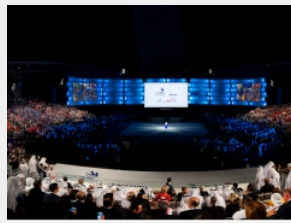
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