



**IBG**

Internationale Begegnung  
in Gemeinschaftsdiensten e.V.

## The local dimension of international volunteering

IBG is a German NGO funded in 1965 and mainly organising international **workcamps** in Germany.

The **accessibility** of international volunteering and the **local impact** of international workcamps have a special focus in the work of IBG.

## International workcamps are local actions as:

- they are always organised together with a local partner
- fulfil a local need
- offer local citizens the chance of international exchange and intercultural learning

## Our local partners confirm:

- that sharing the role of a host of an international workcamp can bind local people together and create local networks.
- that the invitation of a workcamp can promote a local initiative and give an additional public attention to a local need or a local project.
- that the support of international volunteers can give new motivation to local volunteers and attract other citizens.
- that the involved local citizens can experiment all dimensions of international volunteering: working together, learning from each other and sharing the daily life.

## Example 1: Höstensleben



„the village at the  
former border“



- Local need: A group of local volunteers started after the German reunification to maintain parts of the frontier protection as historic monument and memorial for the victims.
- Since 15 years an international workcamp comes every summer to support them with the maintenance.
- Local villagers and international volunteers worked together, shared their life for 3 weeks, learned from each other and enjoyed excursions and parties.

## Influence on the local community:



- young people recognized that learning English can really be useful; everybody learned a lot from the personal exchange with foreigners.
- The presence of international volunteers helped to revitalize the village's cultural life which got less and less as most youngsters left.
- The acceptance and importance of the memorial has grown a lot through these positive projects.
- the long-lasting local engagement of local volunteers was supported as to welcome workcamps gave an additional motivation.



## Example 2: Kohlberg



„support local  
groups and  
actions“



- Local need: build a playground for the local kids in cooperation with a local school for teenager with difficulties. Other works were the renovation of the local soccer field and of the house of the fire brigade.
- In both cases, an afternoon or evening of coming together with the correspondent local group (the soccer team and the voluntary firemen) was organized to create the possibility of exchanging personal, cultural and other experiences between the local groups and the volunteers.



## Influence on the local community:



- The highlight of the project was the participation at the local festival. Volunteers presented more information about workcamps and shared information and specialties of their countries of origin.
- A lot of activities enabled local citizens and international volunteers to experience intercultural life, to exchange ideas to share good moments with each other.



## Summary:

We can just encourage you to think about inviting an international group of volunteers. It stimulates a lot your local engagement and gives an added value to your action.

With Elix you have a good partner at your side to realise this. All present international organisations would be happy to send volunteers to you.

**Thank you very much!**