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Practical Development Assistance by the Senior Expert Corps of Swisscontact

Swisscontact

The Swiss Foundation for Technical Development Assistance is a foundation for aid to the developing nations, carried by the Swiss economy. Its aims are to provide practical training in vocational centres and teaching workshops. For nearly 25 years, mechanics' training schools have been built up, run and later handed over to the local authorities. Agro-mechanics and agriculture complete the programme. The latest and so far biggest task is the creation of a teachers' training centre and providing six engineering schools for the Indonesian Government. Swisscontact has a small work team in Zurich and many young Swiss experts

abroad who are usually engaged specially for such projects.

Senior Expert Corps

There are many problems in the developing countries, whose solutions have still to be improved, in fact some should still be found. The wish to engage experienced experts, therefore, is understandable.

This is the reason why, three years ago, a quite different concept of development aid was established which has been proved successful. In our country, too, many leading experts would like to put their professional experience at the disposal of orga-

nizations dealing with the needs of developing countries, once they have retired from active management. Apart from the already described tasks, Swisscontact has begun to find sensible ways such retired experts can use their experience within the framework of development assistance.

Concept

Swisscontact is trying to find a suitable expert for a particular, properly defined and meaningful task within a state, semi-state or private organization, which can be completed within one to three months.

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job in an honorary capacity, i.e. without salary. Swisscontact pays for the journey and insurance cost for the expert and his wife, and the foreign partner and beneficiary of the project will take on the cost of board and lodging and pocket money.

Experiences

During the exploratory and developing period of the last three years, 20 such engagements have been successfully completed, with only very few exceptions.

These engagements comprised such fields as advising small businesses in Central America, counselling on forestry and timber

work in Ecuador, advice on auditing in Jordania and Lesotho, advising on tourism in Lesotho, as well as tasks in Indonesia in connection with school projects by Swisscontact (training in wrought-iron work, master training, medicine and hygiene, educational aids).

Further such engagements are being prepared, including passing on of technical know-how in factories, which often gets lost through frequent change of personnel.

Appeal

Swisscontact would like to appeal to Swiss organisations and Swiss residents in developing

countries, possibly also in more advanced countries, to let us know if you come across needs such as mentioned above in your surroundings. We shall be pleased to examine such problems and try to find a solution.

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