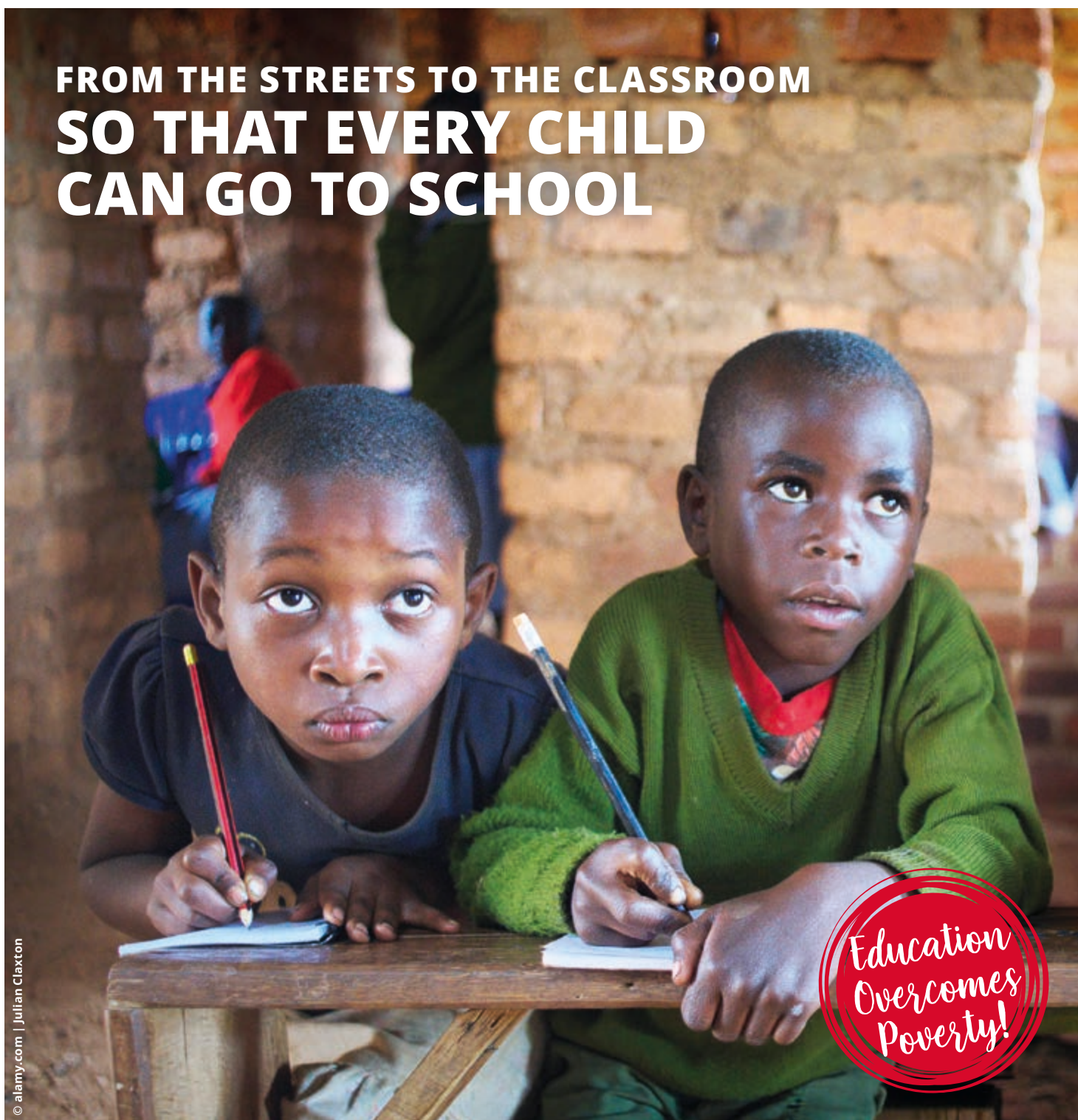




FROM THE STREETS TO THE CLASSROOM SO THAT EVERY CHILD CAN GO TO SCHOOL



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Issue 2 – 2026



Education is important for all children!

Around the world, 272 million children do not attend school

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Where they are safe from violence, exploitation and forced marriage

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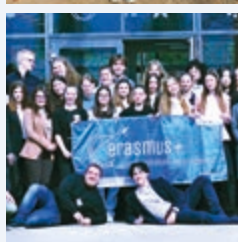
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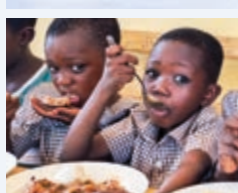
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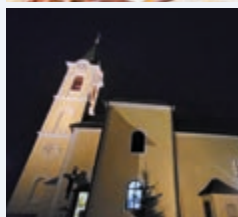
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IMPRINT:

Don Bosco Weltweit no. 7a | Copy deadline: May 2026
Contact: Jugend Eine Welt, Münchreiterstraße 31, 1130 Vienna
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+43 1 879 07 07, info@jugendeinewelt.at
Register number: ZVR 843744258

Donate online: www.jugendeinewelt.at/spenden

Jugend Eine Welt account for donations: IBAN AT66 3600 0000 0002 4000

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Photos, unless otherwise indicated: Jugend Eine Welt, SDB, FMA, MMS, WeltWeg-Weiser, private. **Cover photo:** Children at a village school in Uganda.

13th issue. Further issues are available at jugendeinewelt.at/giovanni or can be ordered from us by phone.

Note: For ease of reading, personal pronouns refer to all genders.

Disclosure in accordance with § 25 of the Austrian law on the media: Reporting on national and international activities undertaken by Jugend Eine Welt.

Carbon-neutral printing was used for this issue of Giovanni.

Education, a Key to Escaping Poverty!

Dear Readers,

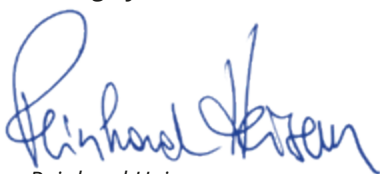
Around thirty-five years ago, I saw first-hand how education programmes in rural Nigeria and, later, in Ecuador gave young people new opportunities and prospects. Since then I have seen this confirmed in a thousand ways. Education overcomes poverty! Day in, day out, year after year.

The chance of an education as described in the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4), namely quality education, is the goal to achieve! The comprehensive approach of the Don Bosco education projects that Jugend Eine Welt supports around the world not only includes the active presence of teachers but also unites three central pillars of education: school education, vocational training and formation of the heart.

Since it was founded, Jugend Eine Welt has supported selected education projects all over the world: from schools for street children to vocational training centres for technology and agriculture to universities that train the teachers and specialists of tomorrow.

What sets my heart beating faster is looking into a classroom where seventy or eighty children sit squashed together on the floor, hanging on to the teacher's every word and soaking up what they are being taught. The earlier educational pathways are made available, the better. A willingness to learn and the requisite level of interest on the part of the children and teenagers can almost always be taken for granted. Those who are permitted and able to learn, do so! All over the world! What we in Austria can do is fill rumbling stomachs before the lessons start and make sure there are enough classrooms and good, well-paid teachers. This doesn't mean we should pay for everything but that we should do our utmost to make up for what the state education authorities in the poorest countries cannot afford themselves. **Education is an investment in a brighter future for everyone!**

THANK YOU for being a discreet but important sponsor of education through your donation! With all my gratitude,



Reinhard Heiserer
Director, Jugend Eine Welt



REINHARD HEISERER RECOMMENDS: WER ÜBERLEBT? Bildung entscheidet über die Zukunft der Menschheit by Reiner Klingholz and Wolfgang Lutz

A book that shows in clear language why education is crucial to the future of humankind, far more so even than natural resources or a strong economy. The scenarios the authors present are particularly thought-provoking: they demonstrate the different paths our world could take – depending on how much is invested in education. At the same time they show how investing in education relates to poverty, stability and extremism.





***Lessons in Ethiopia's
Savannah.***

Lessons Beneath the Open Sky

We have very clear ideas about school: it has classrooms, desks, a timetable. But for millions of children around the world, things are different. Sometimes lessons are held outside under a tree, using whatever comes to hand, such as rocks instead of benches. School adapts to real life, not vice versa. Often, education starts off very simply. What counts is not where it happens, but that lessons are possible in the first place. The examples in this issue show how it can succeed.



**JUGEND
EINE
WELT**



ONE IN SIX YOUNG PEOPLE DOES NOT GO TO SCHOOL. IN POOR COUNTRIES, IT'S ONE CHILD IN THREE.



EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN!

Around the world, hundreds of millions of children do not attend school. Not because they don't want to, but because their lives make it impossible. Poverty, violence and a lack of prospects marginalise them. Only if we understand why they lose their place in the education system will we be able to bring them back.

For many children around the world, the day does not start with the ringing of the school bell – it starts with work. A young girl stands at a dusty crossroads, balancing a bowl of fruit on her head. Cars stop for a moment, windows wind down and a few coins change hands. And so it goes on. Hour after hour. School? Not today. And probably not tomorrow, either.

According to UNESCO, approximately 272 million children and teenagers around the world do not go to school. That's roughly one child in six. This statistic is not down to choice, but to the pressures of circumstance. Reinhard Heiserer, director of Jugend Eine Welt says: "Poverty is the most common reason. If a child is going hungry, education is of secondary importance. What matters then is survival."

That is why approximately 138 million children have to work every day. They sell water, gather rubbish, help in the fields or earn a few coins on the streets. In lives like these there is no room for school.

Childhood under pressure

But poverty is rarely the only reason. Children are driven away from their families by violence, abuse or neglect – often straight »

BODHI IS ONE OF 78 MILLION CHILDREN OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AGE WHO CANNOT GO TO SCHOOL.

onto the streets. “Many children run away from home and have to fend for themselves from a young age,” says Heiserer. The most frequent outcome is a life with no structure, protection or school.

For girls, the obstacles are often even more numerous. In many parts of the world, a child’s chances of developing depend not on its achievements or talents, but on its sex. Early marriage at thirteen, traditional roles or the fear of violence – there are many factors that cause a girl’s time at school to end abruptly. What they all have in common is that hardly any of the girls can ever go back.

But even if they could, schools are often too far away

or too expensive or the route is too dangerous. Schools are destroyed or become impossible to reach owing to armed conflicts and natural disasters. “In addition, state-funded education is often not free,” says Heiserer. “Families have to pay for school uniforms, books and transport themselves. And that’s before we even consider the quality of the lessons.”

A global target, a big gap

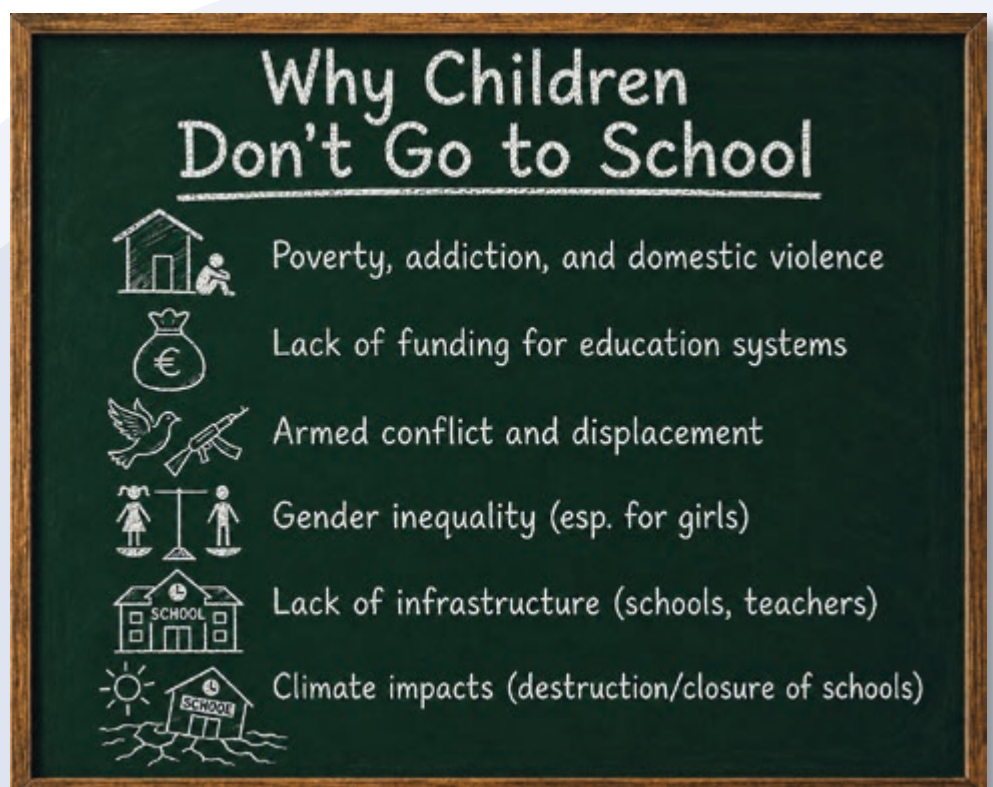
With the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4) the international community committed to ensuring that all children have access to education by 2030. But the reality is that since 2015, no progress

has been made. In sub-Saharan Africa today, approximately 100 million children and teenagers do not attend school. In southern and central Asia the figure is around 90 million.

“To counter this trend, we and our partner organisations are working with the Don Bosco preventive system,” says Heiserer. “The aim is to build relationships and trust. Children must feel safe before they can start learning again. We take their current situation as our starting point. And then we go on with them, step by step.”

The way back to school doesn’t begin with a timetable. It begins with a simple question: “How are you doing?” ■

More on the following pages!



WHERE NO ONE LOOKS

Children who lose their place in the education system do not return by themselves. They must be found. On the streets, in markets or in slums – and sometimes in the most unexpected places. Those are the places our partners go.

Brother Lothar (Monrovia, Liberia)



In Monrovia the search often begins in places one would not normally associate with children. One such is the central cemetery. "Here, children sleep in graves that have been broken open, lying next to the dead bodies to find shelter from the rain, danger and the insecurity of the streets," says Brother Lothar who has been working in West Africa for many years.

Many have lost their family or have run away from violence. Once on the streets they soon fall foul of the law – often through no fault of their own. Jomo, too, was arrested. Brother Lothar regularly visits him in prison, bringing food and organising legal assistance for him. "No one ever asked after me before," says Jomo. "Now Brother Lothar comes to me!"

In his work, Brother Lothar aims to make contact with children, gain their trust and gradually provide them with better prospects. So they can return to an environment in which they can do more than simply fight for survival.

Father Linus (Lagos, Nigeria)



The megacity of Lagos is loud, crowded and hectic. Here, too, many children live on the streets. That is where the streetworker Father Linus seeks out places such as markets, street corners and shanty dwellings – often at night, which is not without its risks since some of the youngsters there have already joined mafia-like groups.

Many of the children still have family, but find very little support and security at home. Their daily lives are marked by violence, hardship and a lack of opportunities. The streets, as dangerous as they are, become the focal point of their lives. "We sleep on the pavements," says the young Rock. "We have to pay for a whole week in advance so they'll let us. If you don't pay, you can't sleep anywhere."

Contact with the children is made not through programmes, but through relationships. "I don't ask them why they're on the streets," Father Linus tells us. "I ask them how they are. If I judge them, they run off. I tell them that we're friends and together we can become better people."

The initial contact may be trivial, but it is crucial: someone is there who listens and treats the child with respect.



People who live on the streets of Monrovia like Jomo are more likely to fall foul of the law.



Building trust: Brother Lothar goes where street children spent their days.



Father Linus also offers children and young people who live on the streets a break from their everyday troubles.



FIT FOR SCHOOL

Children who have lived on the streets or have no daily routine are often unprepared for school life. Before they can start learning they need stability, confidence and fixed routines. This can only be achieved step by step:

SETTING A DAILY TIMETABLE

Fixed times for getting up, eating and going to bed give children stability and clarity.

DEVELOPING SOCIAL SKILLS

Punctuality, reliability and respectful behaviour are practised so the children can progress from survival mode to community life.

CLEANLINESS AND PERSONAL HYGIENE

The children are taught a basic routine for activities such as showering, cleaning their teeth and combing their hair.

FOOD AND TRUST

Children learn to eat regularly while sitting still – and to trust in the fact that there is enough for everybody. Hunger hugely affects their behaviour, so at first they often eat until they are sick.

SPORT AS A STARTING POINT

Football and other sports build confidence, promote team spirit and help children understand rules (more on this from p. 18).

FIRST STEPS AT SCHOOL

Many children have never been to school, so they have to learn to read and write from scratch, regardless of their age.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

In preparatory classes they catch up on lessons and get used to a classroom environment. To begin with, the emphasis is less on achievement than on giving them stability.



Your donation
helps here!

FEATURE



The shelters in Hyderabad and Deodurga are often the first safe haven for girls trying to escape from violence and forced marriage.

SPECIAL PROTECTION FOR GIRLS

In many parts of the world, girls are exposed to great dangers. Poverty, violence and exclusion from education rob them of any chance of leading an independent life. In Nigeria, India and Afghanistan, Jugend Eine Welt supports safe spaces where girls find security, education and new opportunities.

In India, many girls subjected to violence or exploitation remain hidden for a long time. They work as domestics, are married early or become trapped in situations where others decide for them – often, they have no chance of an education. This is where the shelters run by the Salesians of Don Bosco come in.

One example of this is the home for girls in Hyderabad. Forty to fifty girls find shelter here. Many of them were living on the streets or in a violent home environment. For the first time they experience a safe place, regular meals

returned to power, over 2.2 million girls and young women have been barred from schools and higher education. Entire generations are growing up with no access to education.

But there are places where it is still possible to learn. In small, often secret education initiatives, our Jugend Eine Welt partners create spaces where girls can be taught. In safety and hidden from prying eyes, the girls learn reading, writing and arithmetic there.

Above all, however, they experience something they would otherwise be denied: the prospect of a better future.

sleep out in the open,” reports Father Peter Morba, provincial of the Salesians of Don Bosco in Nigeria. “Instead, they become dependent on others, are exploited and abused.”

That is why he set up a shelter for girls. A building in a safe location was renovated. “This project is of immense value to us,” says Morba. It takes in girls who have been subjected to violence, abuse or exploitation.

They are introduced to the shelter with great care. “How can I talk about justice when the child has had nothing to eat?” says Father Morba. The first



For young women in Afghanistan, clandestine schools are the only places that give them the chance of an independent future.



In Nigeria, too, many girls experience exploitation and harassment. The Salesians offer them protection and education.

and a daily routine. Step by step they return to school and gain confidence in themselves.

A home in Deodurga, which houses around fifty girls, does similar work. Many were rescued from child labour or a forced marriage. They are given not just a place to stay but schooling and psychosocial support as well. The goal is to offer them new opportunities away from exploitation and repression.

Both projects aim first to provide shelter and stability, with education and lasting independence as the long-term goal. This creates genuine opportunities for disadvantaged girls.

Learning in secret

While in India safe spaces are being set up, in Afghanistan education itself has become a risk. Since the Taliban

Many of the girls know all too well what is at stake. With no schooling they risk being forced to marry early, becoming dependent on others and having no life of their own. But an education gives them a chance to participate and lead a life in dignity.

This is the point of departure for our projects. They give girls access to education, provide individual support and boost their confidence. The steps taken are often small, but have a big impact. Every girl who can continue her education resists a reality that aims to deny her exactly that. And shows that education cannot simply be prohibited.

Protection from hidden violence

In Lagos, many children live on the streets. Girls often have to hide themselves. “Unlike boys, they don’t

thing is to provide safety and meals and win their trust. After that come school and training, in the Don Bosco Stitches seamstress scheme, for example. This gives the girls concrete prospects, and many of the young women can start leading an independent life and support their families. “Some of them not only look after their relatives but also help pay for other children’s training,” explains Father Morba. In that way, the transition has knock-on effects that go far beyond the individual’s own life.

For young women in Afghanistan, clandestine schools are the only places that give them the chance of an independent future.

In Nigeria, too, many girls experience exploitation and harassment. The Salesians offer them protection and education.



LEARNING TOGETHER

In Ambato in Ecuador, the afternoon often determines the course a life will take. Eleven-year-old Mateo knows it well. In the past, he was left to his own devices after school. He would roam the streets where the risks are great. Nowadays he stays at the Fundación Don Bosco. There he has lunch, gets help with his schoolwork and can take part in leisure activities. The children are given guidance, do their homework and learn to be part of a community. It is precisely this combination of schoolwork and social support that ensures that, instead of losing their way, they commit for the long term.



FIVE SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION PROJECTS



AWAY FROM CIVILISATION

Sinchi is growing up in a remote village in the middle of the Amazon rainforest. Lesson stake place in wooden huts which, for many children, are a long way away from home and hard to reach. At the Wasakentsa Don Bosco school, Sinchi learns to read and write in both his native language and in Spanish. This bilingual education is part of a larger project that has the specific aim of teaching indigenous children. They learn to preserve their culture and, at the same time, to understand and defend their rights.

“Education is a marathon, not an isolated measure!”

Reinhard Heiserer



LESSONS ON THE PAVEMENT

In India, Jugend Eine Welt partner organisations operate very differently, though with the same goal. Here, education often starts on the streets themselves. Asha and several other children sit by a busy junction, writing their first letters on the wall of a building in chalk. These pavement schools were deliberately conceived to be easily accessible: they operate where the children live, inviting them to join in. With no pressure or previous requirements, the children learn the basics and grow in confidence. The next step is enrolment in a regular school.

Lessons are not always held in classrooms. Sometimes they start on the streets, in a refugee camp or in the middle of a rainforest. Places far away from what we know as "school".



SCHOOL OF MAGIC

An unusual approach has been chosen in South Africa. At the College of Magic in Cape Town, children like Liam learn not only magic tricks but above all to believe in themselves. Performing in front of an audience, practising together and clearly structured days boost their self-confidence. Many of the youngsters come from difficult backgrounds. The programme combines creativity with social work. This creates a basis for starting to learn for school again.

SUPPORTED FROM INFANCY

In the Palabek refugee camp in Uganda, education starts at a very early age. Five-year-old Amina goes to St. Daniel's Nursery School. This Don Bosco facility focuses not only on numbers and letters but also on a clearly structured daily routine: fixed times, eating together, learning through play. The nursery is part of a comprehensive education project that also involves families and supports particularly vulnerable children. It offers over 1,200 children access to early learning and subsequent schooling.





„Stable Networks Offer Hope for Young People“

We talked to Rafael Bejarano Rivera, an expert in youth work and social work.

Father Rafael is a Salesian of Don Bosco who has been working with children and young people in difficult circumstances for decades. Whereas he used to work in his home country of Colombia, among others, he is now active at international level. As the Councillor for Youth Ministry and Social Works he coordinates education projects and social project in 138 countries. His credo: *If you want to help, you must start with the individual.*

What has had the biggest influence on your work?

I remember a fourteen-year-old boy. I wanted to take him to a specialist facility because we couldn't give him the support he needed at the time. By law he had two days before we were permitted to take him to the centre. And during those two days he came into contact with a criminal gang again and was killed.

This tragic experience was a turning point for me. I understood that we could not think in systems alone: it was necessary to see every single young person – their story, their reality, their potential. Every young person on the streets needs a family, friends and people who take care of them.

How have the children's daily realities changed over time?

Today, we often see fewer classic

cases of street children. Instead, we see children in street situations. They have a family, but it's dysfunctional. They aren't integrated in the education system and have no stability in their everyday lives, which revolve around the streets. At the same time, these children now communicate in extensive networks. They have smartphones, access to social media and are active in digital spaces that we adults often do not fully understand. This reality presents us with new challenges to the support we offer.

What risks does this entail?

These networks mean that many children get sucked into criminality very early on. They take on small jobs, such as observation, passing on information or acting as couriers. That might seem harmless on the face of it, but it often paves the way for them to join larger networks. These groups quickly recognise the children's talents and integrate them step by step. For the children, it's often the only way to earn some money. And so a circle begins that they find very hard to break out of.

How can children be reached before they take this path?

We have learned that we must adopt different approaches. In the past, we chiefly assisted children who were already on the streets.

Today, we go out into the districts and work with the families themselves. We set up places where children can meet for sport, cultural activities or some other form of companionship.

That enables us to identify the families that are particularly at risk. And we start to work with them – not just the children, but the parents and grandparents as well. We help them to stabilise their daily lives and create opportunities for the future. The aim is to make sure the children don't end up on the streets in the first place.

What is at the heart of your approach?

The first step is always to make people feel welcome. To us, this is not just a philosophy, it's also an educational strategy. We want to break the ice and build trust. Only when a young person starts to open up can they find a direction. The next step is to develop hope. We see hope not as an abstract concept but as something entirely concrete – an individual plan for every child. Lastly, we aim to achieve relationships and cooperation. We work with families as well as with schools and businesses. Only if we succeed in establishing stable networks can a young person develop genuine prospects.



Day for Street Children

Project partner Rafael Bejarano Rivera visited Austria in January 2026 as a guest of Jugend Eine Welt.

When Father Rafael Bejarano Rivera talks about children on the streets it is immediately apparent that for him they are not just statistics, but people.

For decades, the Salesian of Don Bosco from Colombia has been working on behalf of young people marginalised by society.

Now based in Rome, Father Rafael is responsible for the education projects and social projects implemented by the Salesians of Don Bosco in 138 countries. Despite this global responsibility, his perspective remains personal and shaped by many encounters with young people whose stories have stayed with him and still guide his actions today.

Back to a life of security from a life on the streets

His time at the social centre Ciudad Don Bosco Medellín in Colombia left a particularly deep impression on him. He worked there for many years with children and adolescents who lived on the streets, had experienced violence or had even been recruited as child soldiers.

Protection, education and support can enable young people to develop new prospects. According to estimates, as many as 150 million children live on the world's streets at least temporarily – many of them have no birth certificate and no access to school or medical care.

Dialogue and encounters in Austria

During his visit to Austria, Father Rafael gave a first-hand account of this reality at several events, also explaining how concrete help can make a difference. In Vienna his itinerary included a visit to the parish Maria Namen, a workshop with pupils at a secondary school and a talk at the Latin American Institute. He also had the opportunity to meet and talk to people who support his work, at an event in Bad Ischl, Upper Austria, for example.

Making a future possible together

Jugend Eine Welt and the Salesians of Don Bosco have been collaborating closely for many years at international level to give disadvantaged young people access to education, training and psychosocial support. The Day for Street Children 2026 demonstrated once again how important this cooperation is. Behind every statistic there's a young person – who has dreams, talents and the right to a brighter future. www.tagderstrassenkinder.at

What gives you hope?

In many parts of the world we see that young people whom we supported take responsibility themselves later on. Today, some of them work as social workers, teachers or assistants – often in the same place where they received help years before. That shows that change is possible. That lives can be turned around. And that our work makes a difference – not just for individual children, but for whole communities.





A Bond for *Life* – and Beyond

Bequests to Jugend Eine Welt ensure that values are kept alive.

© Thomas Meyer



When you call us, the voice you hear is probably that of our colleague **Nina Hollinger**. For many years, she has been the person to contact for inquiries about bequests. She looks after our donors and organises events. You can meet her in person at countless free talks given by solicitors as part of the “Vergissmeinnicht” (“forget-me-not”) initiative.

What is so special about your job?

I particularly enjoy talking to our donors, for example at events such as the city walk this spring or the talks given by solicitors on inheritance law. In most cases I know the person only from letters and phone calls. But meeting them face to face I learn more about their motivation and their personal stories.

What experience relating to a bequest did you find particularly moving?

It's always moving to find that someone is remembering us in their will. Apart from the financial support, a bond forms that goes

beyond a lifespan and ensures that personal values are kept alive.

What I find especially moving are the moments of remembrance. When I light a candle or visit our



memorial on Hietzing cemetery. I have also had the chance to join relatives in commemorating the lives of family members who have passed and gave children a brighter future through education. That makes this work a particularly good opportunity to pay our respects.

Why is it so important to make a will?

Without a will, the rules of intestacy automatically apply. If you want to specify how your estate is distributed, taking account of

the compulsory portions, you can do this in your will and also name organisations like Jugend Eine Welt as a beneficiary. Many people are unaware that even minor formal defects can render a will null and void. So it's extremely important to obtain detailed advice.

What sort of issues and questions do people contact you about?

They order our free brochures about making a will or ask about solicitors near them. Another issue is how Jugend Eine Welt will be able to meet its obligations successfully in future and continue to implement the donors' wishes. In over thirty years, our founder and director Reinhard Heiserer has established a global network and put our organisation on a stable footing. That means we can guarantee our donors that their contributions will be used in accordance with their wishes.

If you're thinking about remembering Jugend Eine Welt in your will, just get in touch with us – without obligation. We are looking forward to talking to you! ■

Olga Harant: A Life for Young People

How a bequest provides a future.

The life of Olga Harant (b. 16 March 1950, d. 13 May 2025) revolved around strong family ties and her many close friends. An outstanding language teacher and senior staff member at an upper secondary school in Wiener Neustadt, she devoted herself to the education of young people.

As a committed supporter of Jugend Eine Welt she did what she could to help socially disadvantaged children and teenagers around the world, in keeping with our guiding principle, "Education overcomes poverty". Through her bequest to Jugend Eine Welt, the impact of this commitment is still felt, as it continues to change lives today.

Education provides a future

With her great sense of humour, empathy and clear values she had unshakeable belief in the potential of every single young person. For her, education was more than a job: it was her calling. What was especially important to her was that everyone be treated with respect.

At her school she was instrumental

in establishing a positive environment, showing her young charges how they could resolve disagreements by themselves and without resorting to violence – on the school premises and in the world outside. Her passion for languages, cultures and meeting people resulted not only in visits to her family in England but also to many other countries all over the world. Olga Harant had a big and generous heart and was utterly convinced that education builds bridges and makes the future possible.

Thank you for having faith

This dedication and this belief live on: with her bequest, Olga Harant continues to support Jugend Eine Welt and our Don Bosco education projects. These not only promote social skills, tolerance and mutual respect but also give young people and children at risk a future! Through the projects, they have the chance of a good education and an independent life. We are enormously grateful for this show of faith and fondly remember a lady who dedicated her life to young people. Her legacy lives on – today, tomorrow and for so many youngsters. ■



WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO ADVISE YOU

Do you have questions about drawing up your will and leaving a bequest? Take a look at our website at www.jugend-einewelt.at/testament. You can order copies of our free brochure for making a will there and will also find the dates of upcoming solicitors' talks under the "Vergissmeinnicht" scheme. You can, of course, contact us directly with questions about making a will or supporting our aid projects. Remember, it places you under no obligation whatsoever. Feel free to contact us at any time for a personal consultation.

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KICK-OFF FOR A BETTER FUTURE

The 2026 World Cup in North America is all about stadiums, stars and audiences in their millions. But this sport also wields astonishing power far away from the spotlight – from simple pitches for street children to projects for talent development. The common goal: learning teamwork, taking responsibility, resolving conflicts.

*Your donation
♥ helps here!*

Twelve-year-old Ravi is on the football pitch three times a week, training with his team. He practises passes, runs and moves. His life used to be disorganised, school was often neglected, his free time filled with trouble and chaos. Now there is a fixed schedule and a sense of team spirit.

Ravi is part of Sports for Change, a programme that Jugend Eine Welt supports in the southern Indian state of Kerala. Around 1,480 children and adolescents train at six football development centres and a central academy. They come from troubled backgrounds and many have next to no access to regular lessons. "My dream now is to play professionally one day," says Ravi. While this may sound like a pipe dream, it does in fact represent a genuine opportunity, as we shall see.

But first, let's take a look at Quito in Ecuador where the thirteen-year-old Sancho lived on the streets for a long time. His childhood was dominated by violence and insecurity. School did not feature in his life at all. Through a football scheme run by the Salesians of Don Bosco he came into contact with people who began to look after him. "This was the first time I felt like I was part of something," he says. "Suddenly I had friends and people helping me."

The regular games led to real prospects. Today, Sancho is back in school. "Stories like this show what is possible," says Reinhard Heiserer, director of Jugend Eine Welt. "Children

come for the football. And they stay because they see that their lives can change."

Back to life

"Generally, football is especially effective for opening doors," says Heiserer. "Through the sport we reach children who have become cut off from all institutions. Then we can really begin to give them support." Because what looks at first sight like a conventional sports programme is actually part of a much larger social-pedagogical approach.

The coaches talk to the children about their everyday lives and provide one-to-one support. The programmes that Jugend Eine Welt funds purposely take a universal approach. Apart from football the young people learn teamwork, discipline and social responsibility. They take

part in workshops, develop self-confidence and find out how to deal with conflicts.

"Sport creates confidence," says Heiserer. "And confidence is the basis for everything that follows – education, development, an independent life." This approach is proving particularly effective in parts of the world where prospects are bleak or problems such as drug use are on the rise. "Football provides a structure: regular training, clear rules, a trustworthy environment and a team that stays together," says the director.

A global approach

Football is also used in Mexico as a deliberate strategy to fetch children and young people off the streets and protect



Fun and games for everyone: in all projects supported by Jugend Eine Welt, the training sessions always include girls.



ues that extend far beyond the playing field,” says Heiserer. “Team spirit, respect, perseverance: exactly what children need for their future lives.”

No team without girls

One important aspect of every programme that Jugend Eine Welt supports around the world is that girls are always a part of the training sessions. The project partners make a conscious effort to facilitate this, since in many parts of the world it is by no means guaranteed.

Sport is also used as a deliberate strategy in crisis zones. Programmes have shown that football can even help traumatised children regain trust and find stability.

Through the “Sports for Change” programme in India, more and more girls are



them from violence or drugs. Youngsters regularly attend the training offered at Don Bosco youth centres, receiving support for their daily lives at the same time. The “3-Goal Football” project, an anti-violence strategy adopted by Jugend Eine Welt’s Don Bosco projects, shows how football serves as an educational tool.

Here, three teams play on a small, six-sided pitch with three goals. There is no referee. Before the game, the youngsters agree on the rules, such as how to penalise fouls or settle arguments. What counts is not just who scores the most goals but also which is the fairest team. In this way, respect, communication and team conduct help decide the winners.

That changes the character of the game entirely. Good

technique alone is not enough. Aggressive play and infringements of the rules mean points are deducted. Playing fairly, resolving conflicts and involving others are rewarded. This teaches the youngsters to take responsibility – for themselves and for the game. At the same time they learn that rules are not only made by others but result from consensus. “Projects like 3-Goal Football teach val-



Sport is also used as a deliberate strategy in crisis zones. Programmes have shown that football can even help traumatised children regain trust and find stability.

breaking into the country's top teams. Consequently, football is becoming not only an opportunity to develop skills but also to alter established roles.

"Sports for Change" is about much more than having a hobby. The programme was deliberately conceived as football training. The children attend regular training sessions which form part of a scheme recognised by the Indian football association. At its heart is the Don Bosco Football Academy in Vaduthala where talented youngsters from all over Kerala are carefully nurtured in preparation for their further development at national level.

At the same time, the programme remains inclusive, as Reinhard Heiserer emphasises. "It's aimed specifically at children and teenagers from underprivileged backgrounds, regardless of their place of origin, religion or social status. Children with disabilities or learning difficulties are prioritised, as are orphans and those living on the streets or in

problematic home environments. Football offers an opportunity to become part of a stable environment for the first time."

Joining the professionals

Soyal Joshy's story shows what is possible. He started out in a small local club before moving to the Don Bosco Academy in 2019 where he systematically honed his skills. In 2021 he was a member of Kerala's U18 team that won the national youth championship. A year later he was offered a professional contract with Hyderabad FC, the then-reigning champions of the Indian Premier League. Such developments are no fluke. They stem from an approach that unites sport, education and social support as a coherent strategy.

The 2026 World Cup will be

watched by millions of enthusiastic fans, but a more sustainable impact is often achieved away from the big stage. In training centres like the one in Kerala, at football schools in Mexico or on improvised pitches in Latin America, Africa and Asia. "Every day we see what can happen when children are given a chance," says Heiserer. "Often, football is just the start. But it can be the start of something really big." ■



YOUR CHANCE TO WIN!

PRIZE DRAW: Win one of three ONE-world footballs!

Send entries by email to spenden@jugendeinewelt.at marked "Gewinnspiel" (name and address) or use the form at www.jugendeinewelt.at/fussball

United Through Sport

Two Senior Experts on a sporting mission in India.



Reinhard Berger

As an electrical engineer and a secondary-school teacher of maths and PE, Reinhard Berger has experience of both teaching and motivating young people. He wanted to contribute this experience as a volunteer and came across the Senior Experts programme run by Jugend Eine Welt. He chose an assignment in Irinjalakuda, a town in the southern Indian state of Kerala.

During his three-month stint in India the 58-year-old native of Vorarlberg helped at a Don Bosco school with around 3,000 pupils. He



formed a volleyball team, organised training sessions, taught technique and promoted team spirit. In the early mornings he held swimming lessons, while at midday he encouraged children to try other ball games.

Apart from his classes, he also focused on dialogue with the teaching staff. Together they developed ways of bringing more sport into the school day. At the end of his time in Irinjalakuda, Reinhard put together a physical fitness programme for future use by the age groups he had taught. His assignment showed him how much experience Senior Experts can share while at the same time taking many new impressions on board: "Sport is a universal language – it builds bridges, motivates and creates learning opportunities at every level."



Gerald Lachmair

Gerald Lachmair has seen a great deal of the world. The 65-year-old from Upper Austria travelled extensively for decades in the export business before becoming a teacher at a technical college in Steyr fifteen years ago. And all that time his passion for football never left him. As a player, official and referee for the Austrian Football Association he gained many years' experience and knowledge that he now wished to share.





Under Jugend Eine Welt's Senior Experts Austria scheme for sending volunteers abroad, Gerald spent four months in India. At the Don Bosco Academy in Nalgonda, approximately 150 kilometres from Hyderabad, he helped set up the "Football for Youth" project. Around 500 disadvan-

tagged children and adolescents from extremely poor backgrounds attend the Salesians' school. Here they receive a school education as well as opportunities for their later life.

Up to thirty boys and girls aged twelve to eighteen attend the training sessions at the football academy. Lachmair was involved in planning the training, tactics and courses for coaches. He also helped with organisational tasks. "In India, football has so far played only a minor role, but the potential is enormous," he says.

How much enthusiasm the youngsters have for the sport became clear to him during a tournament: to everyone's amazement, the school team finished in third place. "When we came back the entire school was standing at the gates, cheering wildly," Gerald recalls. "That was a highlight." For him, Senior Expert moments like this are priceless. "You go there to help. But in the end, you're the one who's been given the most." ■



SENIOR EXPERTS AUSTRIA

Interested in an assignment as a Senior Expert? We would be pleased to advise you! The Jugend Eine Welt team is there for you, from the first meeting to your return.

Contact & information

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FROM CHAINS TO BRIDGES

Global responsibility starts with everyday things. Young adults and youth workers discussed supply chains and fair trade.

What connection is there between what we consume and the living conditions of people around the world? This was the central question at the international youth conference “From Chains to Bridges” that took place in Vienna in March 2026 and was organised by Jugend Eine Welt as part of an Erasmus+ project.

Over ninety young adults and youth workers from five European countries met to discuss global justice and sustainable supply chains.

Learn, understand, act

The conference marked the conclusion of a project titled “From Chains to Bridges” which had started in April 2024 and brought together

international education work and practical methods. Key questions relating to global supply chains were explored in workshops, training sessions and discussion groups. The result was concrete resources for youth work: a handbook for practitioners, a versatile toolkit and an interactive escape room game. All these materials share a common aim: to enable young people to discover and grasp complex global relationships.

Dialogue among equals

A highlight was the conference day at the Europahaus in Vienna which was open to the public. Figures from politics, science and industry joined the conference participants to discuss ways of achieving fairer supply chains. Among them were Members of the European Parliament

Andreas Schieder and Lena Schilling who underlined the importance of a political framework.

The international perspective of the Global South was particularly illuminating: Don Bosco sister Lisa Elavunkal gave an account of exploitative structures in the Indian tea industry. Her talk revealed the conditions in which many people at the start of global supply chains have to work – and how much they are influenced by our consumption.

A powerful signal for the future

The Youth Conference showed that fair supply chains are no abstract concept; rather, they affect the everyday lives of all of us. At the same time it became clear that young people are greatly interested in and strongly committed to taking responsibility and initiating change.



Scan for the educational resources





Waakye ("wah-chi") with tomato sauce, vegetables and egg

You can't learn on an empty stomach! Thanks to your support, all the pupils at the school in Kulmasa, northern Ghana, have a freshly cooked meal from Monday to Friday, free of charge. For many of them, it's their only meal of the day. "It is without doubt one of the most important investments in the lives of our children," explains Sister Florence. "The brain needs enough sustenance in order to think." Here's the recipe for one of these meals for you to try out.



Children must eat their fill to have sufficient energy for their lessons.

PREPARATION TIME: 45 minutes approx.

INGREDIENTS FOR 4 PORTIONS:

- 2 cups long-grain rice
- 4 vine tomatoes
- 1 large onion
- 2 carrots
- a little leaf spinach (originally: manioc leaves)
- 4 boiled eggs
- Tomato paste
- Salt, pepper, curry & mixed spices

METHOD:

- 1 Wash the rice and boil in plenty of salt water for 10 minutes. Strain, put the lid on the saucepan and leave to stand.
- 2 Hard-boil the eggs. Rinse in cold water.
- 3 Dice the tomatoes and onion, thinly slice the carrots. Finely chop the spinach leaves.
- 4 Fry the onion and carrots at a medium heat for 10 minutes in a frying pan with a little oil. Add the tomato paste and spices and fry for another 2 minutes. Then add the diced tomatoes and leave to simmer until the tomato sauce is somewhat reduced. Add a dash of water if the sauce is too thick.
- 5 Add the spinach leaves and stir.
- 6 Season to taste. Serve the rice with the sauce and one peeled egg on each portion.

During her last project trip, our honorary board member visited the school canteen near the village clinic.



Project partner Sr. Florence sent us the weekly school meal plan from the project that Jugend Eine Welt supports in Kulmasa, Ghana. She said, "The school meals give the children strength and keep them healthy."

WEEKLY MEAL PLAN	
MONDAY	Rice and bean with fish sauce and vegetables
TUESDAY	Banku with groundnut soup and fish
WEDNESDAY	Rice and bean with fish sauce and vegetables.
THURSDAY	Rice with tomatoes, vegetables and an egg
FRIDAY	Beans with manioc leaves and rice

Eat well, Grow well,
Do your best!



Don Bosco in Lanzenkirchen

A legacy that's still felt today.

Giovanni Melchiorre Bosco only ever came to Austria once. In the year 1883, the patron saint of young people and Jugend Eine Welt undertook an arduous journey to offer spiritual comfort to the seriously ill Count Chambord at Schloss Frohsdorf near Lanzenkirchen in Lower Austria.

While he was there, Don Bosco also took the opportunity to meet the townsfolk, especially the young. His main message: to accompany young people with love, trust and education. This philosophy is still the driving force behind all Don Bosco undertakings around the world.

Commemorative mass draws a crowd

Over 140 years later, on 31 January 2026, St. John Bosco's commemoration day, a remembrance service was held at this historic location, in Lanzenkirchen parish church.

Many parishioners attended and the church was packed to the rafters. Mass was celebrated by Father Nester and the Salesian Father Josef Szigeti SDB. The Belcanto choir, conducted by Jörg Trnka, created a particularly celebratory atmosphere.



Verging on recklessness

In his address at the conclusion of mass, Reinhard Heiserer of Jugend Eine Welt reminded the congregation that Don Bosco's work is as necessary today as it has ever been. Drawing on his many years' experience of Don Bosco projects around the world,

he stressed the vital importance of education, training and formation of the heart for young people. His appeal to the congregation: "Let us all continue this work and, following Don Bosco's example, do things that verge on recklessness to secure the future of children and young people."

The evening was rounded off by an agape at which the visitors chatted in a spirit of mutual appreciation and thankfulness, in memory of Don Bosco and as an incentive to continue his legacy today. ■



Reinhard Heiserer, director of Jugend Eine Welt, talks about Don Bosco and the continuing importance of youth work during the commemorative service.



Don Bosco (1815 – 1888) pioneer of social work and young people's saint,

is the patron saint of Jugend Eine Welt. His devotion to children and young people is the example we aim to follow. He set up several workshops so that street children in 19th-century Turin could obtain a good education. The dedicated priest also negotiated the first indentures for the youngsters in his charge. Today, the numerous Don Bosco projects in over 130 countries worldwide provide young people with solid vocational training. That gives them the chance of a better life.

GOOD NEWS



FLORIAN KUNTNER AWARD FOR JUGEND EINE WELT

Marvellous accolade for the Jugend Eine Welt initiative "Action Group Against Child Labour". Archbishop Josef Grünwidl presented the team of young volunteers with the Florian Kuntner Award in the "Educational Work for One World" category. The "Action Group Against Child Labour" pursues the aim of making young people in Austria aware that child labour and exploitative global supply chains represent serious violations of human dignity. "For Jugend Eine Welt, the Florian Kuntner Award is a tremendous incentive to continue on our chosen path," says Jugend Eine Welt director Reinhard Heiserer. "Education, information and joint action as powerful instruments for more global justice."

Vienna



ON THE TRAIL OF OUR ONE WORLD

In April, supporters and donors of Jugend Eine Welt set out on a special voyage of discovery through Vienna's 4th district. They walked from Karlsplatz over Naschmarkt to the Ehrbar Saal, where Cathrin Chytil, the venue's artistic director, and Gerald Schmid, the business manager, gave them an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at this gem of Jugendstil architecture. Famous composers such as Johannes Brahms, Anton Bruckner and Gustav Mahler once performed in the Ehrbar Saal, which was built in the late nineteenth century and is still renowned for its outstanding acoustics today. The building was taken over in 2021 by piano-makers C. Bechstein and has been undergoing extensive refurbishment, in accordance with the strict regulations for protecting historical buildings, ever since. C. Bechstein and Ehrbar Saal are partners of Jugend Eine Welt.

Upper Austria



A VISIT TO GOVERNOR DR. THOMAS STELZER

To mark the annual "Day for Street Children" organised by Jugend Eine Welt at the end of January, the organisation's guest, Fr. Rafael Bejarano Rivera SDB, also visited Upper Austria. A special meeting took place in Linz. Upper Austria's governor, Dr. Thomas Stelzer, received first-hand information from Fr. Rafael about the projects funded by Jugend Eine Welt around the world. The native of Colombia is not just a long-standing Jugend Eine Welt project partner but also Councillor of the Salesians of Don Bosco and as such the most senior spokesman and expert for youth work and social work.

Photo, right to left: Upper Austrian governor Dr. Thomas Stelzer, Fr. Rafael Bejarano Rivera, Hildegard Pesendorfer and Jan Mende (Jugend Eine Welt).

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