

PERSPECTIVES

NEWSLETTER OF EXPOSURE- AND DIALOGUE PROGRAMME E.V.
SPECIAL - EDP COOPERATION WITH GERMAN PARLIAMENT

Contents of this issue

- *EDP Briefing Session with MPs*
- *Impacts of EDP - An Example*
- *Participants' Reports - Highlights*
- *Looking Back: Cooperation with the German Parliament*



Dr. Susanne Kastner,
Vice president of the German Parliament

EDP Briefing Sessions with MPs

Former EDP participants from among the members of the German parliament hosted an EDP briefing session with the title "Development has got a face", which took place on the premises of the German parliament on 16 March 2005. Interested MPs were invited to ask questions with regard to contents and organisation of EDPs and to discuss them with former MP participants and the EDP e.V. team.

19 MPs followed the invitation and contributed to a lively discussion. They were welcomed by Dr. Susanne Kastner, Vice

President of the German parliament, who emphasised the positive experiences which the German parliament has made with EDPs and promised to participate in one of the next programmes. Mrs. Karin Kortmann MP gave a brief report on her EDP learning experience with participatory poverty alleviation and the practical impact of the Bolivian Popular Participation Act, which is a highly topical political issue in this Latin American country. "Bolivia is one of the countries where EDP e.V. cooperates with an experienced partner

organisation", said Dr. Elke Löbel (EDP e.V.) giving an overview of the contents and organisational aspects of EDPs. Lothar Binding MP, Peter Weiß MP and Hartwig Fischer MP explained to what extent their exposure experiences influenced their evaluations of the current conflicts in Bolivia. In this special you will find further information on this briefing session and on the cooperation between EDP e.V. and the German parliament. With kind regards,
your EDP e.V. team

Impacts of EDPs - An Example



„Programmes like these are a perfect way for MPs and other office-holders to make experiences so deep they can change their attitudes and consequently the actions they take...“.
Claudia Nolte, MP

Moved by her experience with the EDP carried out in cooperation with Watershed Organisation Trust (WOTR) in India, **former Federal Minister Claudia Nolte MP** reported on her activities following her participation. The EDP on the *General conditions for the self-government of watershed areas* helped her to understand the critical factors for successful development cooperation. After the EDP, she stayed in touch with the Indian partners on an unofficial basis. She invited WOTR staff mem-

bers to come to Germany and coordinated meeting contacts in Germany in 2002, among others with the German-Indian parliamentary group which she had joined after her EDP participation. Claudia Nolte supports a WOTR project focusing on self-governed water supply in favour of the highly discriminated indigenous people. Fascinated by the potential of people struggling to escape poverty in extremely barren areas, Claudia Nolte visited tribal villages in 2003 and 2004: "The formerly shy and with-

drawn people have turned into active project partners." And the process is going on: fund raising activities and return visits with Indians attending seminars on development policies in Illmenau (Germany) help to promote partnerships at local level. A trainee from her constituency is currently staying in India. Claudia Nolte is planning to visit India together with people from her constituency in December 2005.

Participants' Reports - Highlights

Around 30 politicians (MPs from European, Federal and regional parliaments) have participated in EDPs until today.

“Exposures are so important because they provide new insights based on one’s own experience gained in unfamiliar situations of life. They make us realize that our own knowledge is limited... The group reflection, especially the dialogue with the Bolivian participants, revealed that the various families and villages do have comparable problems which promote certain developments and impede others.

Political decisions are needed – in Bolivia and in Germany.”
Lothar Binding, MP, EDP Bolivia 2004

“When you learn from experience what it means to be poor, even if it is only for some days, this will change your personal perspective. Then you will see many things from a different point of view. Programmes like these are indispensable for cross-cultural understanding. I hope that as many people as possible will have the chance to participate in such a programme.”

Hartwig Fischer, MP, EDP Bolivia 2004

“This was the most important point for me: I realized that, despite all doubtful side effects, at least in the medium term, stabilising and (temporarily) expanding informal labour is the only way for many people in the developing countries to be integrated into the productive process. [...]”

Ottmar Schreiner, MP, EDP Dominican Republic 2003



*Hartwig Fischer, MP
“Migration and distribution of property” EDP in Bolivia, 2004*

Looking Back: Cooperation with the German Parliament

Some selected milestones and results of the cooperation between EDP e.V. and the German parliament: In 1992, the committee on economic cooperation (AwZ) recommended participation in EDPs: “*The Federal Government is called to expand exposure and training programmes in developing countries to enable decision-makers and Government officials in Germany and abroad as well as staff members of the partner organisations to gain personal insight into self-help oriented poverty alleviation. The Government is called to create the necessary budgetary prerequisites.*”

In 1994 and 1998, after the first MPs had participated in EDPs, Dr. Rita Süßmuth, then president of the German parliament, called MPs to participate in EDPs in a letter addressed to the parliamentary committees: “*This is a good opportunity to gain personal insight into self-help oriented poverty alleviation.*” In 2002, after a visit to SEWA (partner organisation of EDP e.V.), the women’s self-help organisation in India, the inquiry committee on “globalisation” of the German parliament recommended

participation in these programmes to the members of parliament. In 2003, after his meeting with a family in Bolivia, Wolfgang Thierse, President of the German parliament, again recommended participation in EDPs to all parliamentary committees. On 3 March 2003, EDP e.V. and 8 partner organisations from Asia, Latin America and East Europe presented and discussed their common activities and results in the AwZ.

For more detailed information please contact the EDP e.V. office.



*Karin Kortmann, MP und
Peter Weiß, MP
EDP briefing session,
March 16th 2005*

Exposure- und Dialogue Programme 2005: Indien:

EDP on „Decent Work for All“ in cooperation with SEWA, DGB and J&P

Uganda:

EDP in the context of the UN International Year of Microcredit in cooperation with BKU, UMU and CERUDEB

IMPRINT



Exposure- und
Dialogueprogramme e.V.

EDITOR & LAYOUT: DR. ANGELIKA STAUDER
(V.I.S.D.P.)
EXPOSURE- UND DIALOGUE PROGRAMME E.V. (EDP)
KAISER-FRIEDRICH-STR. 9 D - 53113 BONN
PHONE +49-228-103 337 FAX +49-228-24 39 532
E-MAIL: EDP@EXPOSURE-DIALOG.DE
WEB: HTTP://WWW.EXPOSURE-DIALOG.DE