

International Development Cooperation - Courses for Experts

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International development cooperation in the health sector draws its motivation often from an idealistic or humanistic basic attitude, but it has to grapple with the necessity of an increasing professionalism, too. The will to help is important, but is not sufficient in order to be able to offer effective help. For that reason I welcome the fact that the range of training opportunities in this sector is permanently widened. The basis for a collaboration in international health promotion is still thorough studies in one of the health care disciplines, if possible combined afterwards with a special training in tropical medicine or community based health care with the aim of being well prepared for specific demands in partner countries. This special training phase is often followed by a longer stay in a foreign country where the trainee can gain more detailed practical experiences.

The so called expert courses are meant for experts who can already look back on experience in a foreign country and have an equivalent training, but with that background they aim at highly specialised tasks in international health work. These highly specialised tasks are for example the development and coordination of complex programmes, the fight against specific illnesses, scientific or conceptual tasks or the collaboration in international organizations. The necessary qualifications can comprise very different subjects. Important elements are the analysis and interpretation of epidemiological data, knowledge in health economy and the financing of health services in developing countries or the management of personal and other resources. A lot of these qualifications can be obtained in the course of public health studies. In that respect I would like to point out that the larger schools of public health offer a wide range of lectures and seminars so that it is already possible to specialise in specific themes while studying public health. In this course catalogue "Going International" you also find short period post graduate courses for very specific demands which are not offered either by medical schools or schools of public health, but by schools for developmental management or economics. These courses can be very helpful for medical doctors in development cooperation, because as a rule these subjects are seldom taught in medical training. Due to the shifting of the training priorities you can realize that the activities in development cooperation are in the process of developing more and more away from the clinical medicine to management tasks.

At the same time it has to be underlined that a good clinical basic training is of decisive importance further on because without concrete clinical experience it is often difficult to develop effective programmes in order to fight specific illnesses and without direct experiences in health institutions it is difficult to organise health services meeting the demands of a qualified health care, especially under difficult conditions with limited resources.

But regardless of the professional background and all justified demands for extensive training and professionalism human qualities, the readiness to work under simple conditions and

competence in intercultural cooperation remain the basic preliminaries for a successful collaboration in international health care.

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