



# IT'S PEOPLE THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We used to speak of a *brain drain* when people left their country of origin in the developing or emerging world to try for a better life somewhere else, to complete a course of training, to study or find employment. Today we are more likely to talk of a *brain gain*, and there are good reasons for this.

Having access to the 'globalised' world – knowing how it works and being able to use the knowledge it offers – has become an important factor for social and economic progress everywhere in the world. Since migration plays an important role in this, it has come to be seen as an important element for the private sector and for development – both for the migrants' home country as well as the destination country. The fact is that even when people from developing countries remain abroad, they not only contribute to progress and development wherever they are, but often become actively involved long distance on behalf of their countries of origin. They establish enterprises and associations, get aid projects going, support family members and friends by sending back money and promote scientific and academic cooperation among different countries. And, at some point, some of these 'expatriates' think about going home again, temporarily or permanently – often to use their newly gained knowledge and experience to bring about important changes in their own countries.

Many migrants from developing and emerging countries find themselves confronting this crucial decision of whether to return home or to stay abroad, and they look about for advice and support. In Germany they can get both from the Returning Experts Programme of the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM). CIM, a joint operation of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the International Placement Services (ZAV) of the Federal Employment Agency (BA), conducts the programme with financ-

ing from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The aim of the Returning Experts Programme is to harness the great potential of well-trained, well-educated returnees for the development of their countries of origin. Specifically, this means applying their knowledge, experience and contacts in the right places to make development efforts on site even more effective. When such efforts succeed, everyone stands to benefit: the returnees, the country of origin, and – in a world that is increasingly networked – Germany as well. The attached examples illustrate the range of interesting possibilities that are out there.

### Concrete offers in the Returning Experts Programme:

CIM supplies experts still living in Germany but interested in returning home with information about opportunities on job markets in their countries of origin. CIM also offers these experts individualised consulting services to help them plan their return home and their future careers, and it passes on attractive job offers too.

Those who do decide to return home are not just left to their own devices. In many countries, CIM has advisors who assist returning experts with their search for a suitable job or who help them get their degrees and diplomas recognised. These advisors support returnees in many other professional matters as well and generally make it easier for them to fit back in.

CIM also attempts to integrate returning experts into the activities of German and international development organisations in their home country and to forge interesting contacts for them.

Returnees who apply their knowledge in positions relevant to development policy are also eligible for financial support from CIM. Of particular interest in this respect are monthly salary subsidies, which CIM pays for up to two years. Opportunities for financial promotion are also there for people who have not yet made up their mind and would prefer a trial return period or internship to start with. Returnees are also eligible for financial support for workplace equipment.

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