

Reaching for global change as the path widens

In the beginning of my engagement in Haiti, I frequently stumbled over my own basic question concerning my "interventions" in this country:
What gives me the right for any kind of intervention at all?

Shouldn't it be "none of my business", what the Haitians do or don't do in their own country?

This was a serious question after the first negative experiences while working in Haiti. My own inner development, however, allowed me to become more conscious. This resulted in a firm view on the question of the right (or even the moral obligation) to intervene – and also on a clarification of:

My motivational background

After my inward journey I now firmly believe that ALL is interconnected through the inner nucleus of all that exists through an all encompassing divine SPIRIT. This, of course, includes all human beings in ONE world in diversity. This asks for responsibility and solidarity. There are certainly additional rational reasons for healing and problem solving action in our world. World peace, physical as well as economical and social security and prosperity for all beings need active individual and global solidarity. But beyond all additional rational reasoning, we human beings have the freedom and face a challenge, mainly due to our interconnectedness and rooted in a cosmic consciousness, to co-create a balance in solidarity which

- 1) protects and preserves the grown and further developing base of all that exists, i.e. nature;
- 2) enables peaceful loving togetherness of people, capable to lead a life in dignity in social structures, which are defined by the "golden rule";
- 3) allows all people to benefit from the fruits of research and creative productivity – according to their engagement and efforts – in an open, fair and efficient way. This requires a global market economy which, however, must be effectively limited by the correcting factors 1) and 2), therefore a global "Eco-social market system".

ONE world in balance is a vision.

ONE world in diversity is a reality (at least in my consciousness).

"The whole, ALL, must grow through learning", is the first guiding message which anchored itself in my inner system. Desired and accepted spiritual guidance in combination with rational reflection gives birth to visions. From vision to action is a path to walk on. I see it as my path. Besides actively taking part in life with my own limited possibilities, for me this means trying to build bridges from visions to reality – and to connect people.
All adds sense to (also my) life.

This summarizes my inner motivation and basic view for action in our world. The intention in writing this forth chapter of the book was not to try to formulate one more development theory, but to concentrate on some basic guidelines of work born out of my own practical experience during the first years of activity in Haiti. This practical experience in problem-

solving was originally influenced by my former life as a management trainer and manufacturer. As such, I was predominantly interested in people: those who came to my trainings, those who worked with me in business and, last not least, my customers – therefore my learning happened mostly on the micro-level. There, "solidarity in humility" seems to be the appropriate guiding expression.

The same question, concerning justification for interventions from the outside, must also be asked on a global level. My view of all encompassing interconnectedness through ONE divine SPIRIT cannot be limited to individual human beings. The world community is interconnected as ONE in diversity. All are responsible to practice solidarity and intervene with compassion, when and where this is truly needed and possible. Between individuals, the golden rule ("do not do to others, what you do not want them to do to you") clearly sets limits to interventions. Globally, this is much more complicated. But the dilemma still needs to be addressed – and solved, if possible. Since the question, when and where interventions are permitted in a development process, is delicate, the whole issue must first be responsibly and deeply reflected in a holistic (or integral) way, before it can be formulated in a political vision.

In 1993, I had already felt the need to ask myself this question. In the brochure for the 10th anniversary of the Foundation, I wrote an article in German on the dilemma of development assistance versus intervention. As mentioned before, those years were for me heavily loaded with inner movement. This made it even more difficult to find the right answer in my own mind and soul. In practice, this question greatly depends on grown cultural value systems in the world, which cannot be overlooked. Firstly, however, I had to get a clear picture in my own mind.

To again summarize my basic learnings in the first ten years in Haiti, I realized that *nobody, nothing can be developed*, but that solidarity was and is still needed. Solidarity is, however, one form of intervention. It is easier to first look, which kind of interventions in solidarity are effective. To practice solidarity, I found two major development "instruments" to be effective on micro-levels and got involved in their use:

Micro-financing through micro-credits and micro-grants for immediate healing of problems and – for long-term healing – early and continuing learning for life.

The functioning of those "instruments" cannot be seen independently from a suitable framework – political, social, environmental, economical, cultural and technological. Those framework conditions were, of course, out of my reach, when I tried to find "my" solution to the problem of interventions in the world. Later, now, I do believe that as a thinking, feeling and learning being and as part of civil society, I even have a moral duty to also "get involved" in our world's framework conditions.

In the first roughly ten years of my involvement in development, my consciousness had not yet accepted such necessity. I also did not even believe in the vague possibility to get involved in global framework conditions in some effective way. But reflecting about it was still needed. Here is the essence of those reflections fifteen years ago:

The dilemma boiled down to the controversy between intervention and freedom. As a European (a "member of old Europe", as we liked to see each other in our circle of friends), I firmly believe in the unconditional priority of all human rights, as they are publicly acclaimed

and respected in most parts of our (at least western/northern) cultures. Spiritually I see freedom as the greatest divine gift to humanity – next to LOVE. Legally and spiritually this individual freedom is clearly limited by the golden rule (at least in principle).

The sad fact that the golden rule is not at all respected by all humans and by humanity as a whole is in my view the origin of evil. I see evil as the price of freedom. But not all erring, not all mistakes can be considered to be evil. Freedom clearly incorporates choice. Whether such choice is made in a "good" way, is not up to me or up to us to decide. Freedom without choice would not be freedom, and I feel that we have to defend the right to make mistakes – our own right to mistakes, but also the right of others, of individuals and of all groups, nations and states. This makes interventions so difficult.

As a human family we must (and always did) organize us in some way and give us a legal framework. Today, democracy is the key to find the best possible middle course for this legal structure. At least, I cannot think of a better alternative. Since without any doubt we are only ONE world in diversity, we need a legally binding global law and, therefore, also global democracy – including (finally) a world parliament.

Since installing a functioning democracy is also part of the freedom of groups of humans, we must accept or at least tolerate other organizational solutions – as long as the freedom of human beings in such "other" legal frameworks is not totally disregarded. Since only a relatively "fair" and transparent global democratic system can decide, when human freedom is disregarded in an intolerable way, we will not reach any definite solution for our problem until we have organized ourselves democratically in the global village.

In my German article of December 1993, I came to the following conclusion (to appease my own mind): *"Since freedom to develop individually includes diversity and erring, we must differentiate between seemingly erring ways, which happen in freedom and framework conditions where freedom to develop does not exist. Only to enable development in freedom, interventions should be permitted – and even asked for."*

I am sure that many other people have dealt with these problems and probably even published their findings. Unfortunately, I did not know where to look for such solutions, except in my own mind and soul. My article for the 10th anniversary of the Foundation ended with this attempt:

"It may be a utopia to want to co-create a world, in which every human being joins in with his contribution in free, conscious, self-chosen diversity, treating himself and his social and natural environment in a loving way, in respecting the differences of all others, contributing to the creation of ONE world in peace and liberty. This, however, must not remain a utopia, but must transform itself into a vision to go for. Every step in this direction is progress."

Now, 15 years after this had been written, the world has become even more complex. This is not only due to globally shifting human power structures visible behind our time horizon, but to the growing need to extend global consciousness to cosmic consciousness. Science is getting more knowledgeable about the structure of our universe. We, for example, are learning to better understand where we, humanity and our world, are positioned in the middle of an incredible cosmic size scale from the smallest to the largest. We know that we certainly are not eternally existing as a livable planet. On the other hand, the potentially "usable" time on earth is marvelously huge (in terms of human life) – if we do not destroy the basis of our existence, nature. This implies great challenges for development, but equally great

responsibility for future generations. Cosmic consciousness allows us to realize those dimensions.

Asking for *cosmic* consciousness may be asking too much in a time, where the majority of people are still struggling with their daily survival problems and cannot even permit themselves to think globally, to open up to a global consciousness. Other people have found their inner peace by living their lives in a more or less happy way without bothering what might follow after they have died.

For those, who care about what will happen on earth after they are gone, at least a global consciousness, with subsequent global responsibility and solidarity is an imperative mental requirement. Besides caring for themselves and their immediate surroundings, our most urgent common problems in the world (like affordable food and drinking water for everybody) can only be "heal-solved" on a world-wide scale. That requires at least a global, if not cosmic consciousness as a precondition for successful global healing action. In that light, our momentary differences in daily national and regional politics look ridiculous.

Such reflections will unfortunately not change much in practice. They may, however, encourage the birth of visions for the needed feasible changes on all levels.

In practice, Haiti continued (and continues) to need much of our efforts as well as our funds. But Haiti also continued to be the essential learning field for needed change, including in politics – here in German development politics. Now the scope of consciousness had widened and the motivation to tackle the "new dimensions" had further grown, opportunities for change on a scale reaching beyond Haiti became visible.