

Interview with Andrea von Rauch

Director of the Academy for International Cooperation (AIZ) at GIZ

'Lead the way and learn as we go' – Capacity development and further training at GIZ

Part of our social responsibility involves retaining the employability of our staff. In addition to a work-life balance and career development, this also means developing the skills set of our workforce. GIZ's Academy for International Cooperation (AIZ) offers an extensive range of training opportunities.

Ms von Rauch, you are the Director of GIZ's Academy for International Cooperation (AIZ). What role does capacity development and training play in terms of the employability of GIZ staff?

Capacity development and training are hugely important for us as a company and for the employability of our staff. The environment in which international cooperation operates is becoming increasingly dynamic and complex. The demands on GIZ staff are expanding parallel to this, making further training increasingly important.

AIZ offers an extensive portfolio of training and other learning formats for GIZ staff. This obviously addresses national personnel in our partner countries as well. The Academy is responsible for the quality of these services and for their implementation: in Germany and in the field structure, at our training hubs like the one in Bangkok, and through our expanding online training services.

In addition, our expertise is available to all GIZ projects within the scope of their capacity development strategy. The Academy offers services for projects and programmes on every aspect of learning and capacity development. On behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, we also prepare experts and managerial staff for their assignments in 120 countries. This involves training in security and intercultural communication, in addition to country analyses.



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GIZ currently has a workforce of more than 22,000 around the world. Do your training services reach all employees, and if so, how?

It really is an enormous challenge to reach all 22,000 GIZ employees worldwide. In recent years we have started to set up regional training hubs in the field structure and we are increasingly holding training events at our hubs in Addis Ababa, Dakar, Bangkok and Bogotá. And for some time now we have been working to increase our range of digital learning services, e.g. webinars, to expand the range of the services we offer. I would say that we are on the right path – although we have a lot of work ahead of us.

Does AIZ also offer training for external service providers?

Yes, some of our trainings are open to external candidates. Our external service providers often book courses on GIZ's management model Capacity WORKS, or on safety as well as security training for overseas assignments. Our main target group is still GIZ employees though.

We are hearing a lot about the challenges of the digital transformation at the moment. GIZ too is undergoing a digital transformation. Against the background of digitalisation, how will AIZ's learning services change in the future, and how do you aim to ensure that as many staff members as possible feel that they are not being left behind?

Yes, the digital transformation is in full swing at GIZ as elsewhere. AIZ has an important part to play in this transformation, as it is responsible for developing the digital skills of staff with the help of a wide range of different learning formats. But we also see it as our job to create and foster a positive learning culture at GIZ. Learning means more than just attending courses. Learning takes place in a wide variety of ways and it uses many different channels – not least new media. In addition to further training courses, people learn in their day to day work and through discussions with colleagues. As digital options develop, learning formats are changing at breakneck speed, and we at the Academy aim to continually expand GIZ's learning ecosystem. Our motto at the Academy is 'Lead the way, and learn as we go!'

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