



Children for Tomorrow

FOUNDATION UNDER CIVIL LAW

TODAY

Dear Reader

Throughout the world, 2009 began with challenging prospects, but also with a sense of confidence. Whether in the realm of politics or on the fringes of society – in many so places in the world, there is a great need for people who will carry our support to those who are suffering and give them confidence in their hopes and visions.

Bringing hope to crisis areas is what Children for Tomorrow's work is about: we want to help children who have become victims of war and violence find their way out of despair and offer them chances for a new future. We want to give them the strength to take their future into their own hands, and are working to help them believe that their dreams – many them realities that we take for granted – are not beyond their reach, but close enough to work for.

I am particularly happy that we are able to share the opening of Eritrea's first kindergarten with you in this newsletter. Around 300 children will be cared for in "Inclusive Programs". For the coming year, we have set out on a further project: in April 2009, Children for Tomorrow will open an outpatient clinic in Gulu, Northern Uganda for war-traumatized children, with the capacity to treat 200 children per year.

With this newsletter, we would like to inform you about the progress made in our different projects, and bring our endeavor closer to you by telling about some of the children we are helping, as representatives for millions of children who are in need of support. The memory of Raja, a little girl who is being treated in our outpatient clinic in Hamburg, telling about the loss of her "magical powers" remains just as vivid to me as the experiences of 14-year-old Francis, who was abducted by rebels in Uganda. We hope that our newsletter will help convey how great a crisis we, with your help, are working together to relieve, and which goals still remain before us.

With much optimism for 2009 and heartfelt thanks to all of our friends and benefactors,

Yours sincerely,

Stefanie Graf
Chairwoman



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THE FOUNDATION

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Chairwoman



RA Joerg Fischer
Att. Vice Chairman



Prof. Dr. med. Jörg F. Debatin,
MD

Children for Tomorrow is a non-profit foundation with the purpose of supporting children and families who have become victims of war, persecution and organized violence. The Foundation's establishment is the result of many years of contact between Stefanie Graf and the doctors in the Outpatient Clinic for Refugee Children and their Families at the University of Hamburg Medical Center, and was initiated after talks with representatives of WHO and UNICEF.

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INTRODUCING

In this edition, we are pleased to introduce Professor Dr. Jörg Debatin as a new Board Member, and Ms. Stephanie Hermes as assistant to the Board:

Prof. Dr. med. Jörg F. Debatin

Professor Dr. Debatin has taken Prof. Dr. Riedesser's place on the Foundation Board. He is the medical director and Chairman of the Board of the University of Hamburg Medical Center. His specialist background in diagnostic and interventional radiology on an international level has led him from Durham, Stanford, Zurich and Essen to Hamburg, and was sequel to an education characterized by numerous stays abroad. During his tenure as Medical Director at the University of Zurich Medical Center, Prof. Debatin obtained an additional degree in Organizational Management at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland. In 1999, he was appointed Full Professor for diagnostic radiology at the University of Essen, Germany.

Professor Debatin is married with four children.



Stephanie Hermes, M. A.

Stephanie Hermes has been a valuable new addition to our team since November 2008. She is responsible for the organization of the foundation's Hamburg office, which, once the new building is ready, will commence operations on a new level. In addition to administrative and organizational tasks, Ms. Hermes supports us in Public Relations, an area in which she has gathered extensive experience since graduating with degrees in German studies, linguistics and media studies. After an internship at the headquarters of publishers Droemer-Knauer in Munich, she worked as a radio author for culture magazines for the German National Broadcasting Network. Following one and a half years in Public Relations at the New York publishers St. Martin's Press and Picador USA, she moved on to become project manager at Konzerthaus Berlin. As part of the Alfred Toepfer Foundation scholarship program "Innovation in Culture", she gathered further experience in marketing and public relations. After this, she moved to the Foundation "Kulturstiftung der Länder", where she worked mainly as an editor, in particular of reports on the Foundation's activities. In her free time, she enjoys traveling and plays the piano.

CHRONICLE CHILDREN FOR TOMORROW





CfT Kosovo receives official award from the City of Gjakova

January brought great news for our project team in Kosovo: the project's youth work was chosen as one of the three best culture and youth initiatives of 2008 by Gjakova's mayor. The drama projects were particularly popular with the jury, and the mayor personally expressed his praise for the director's exceptional work and the outstandingly professional acting skills of one of the young performers.



Gjakova's Mayor presents local project manager Urim Deva with the award

Opening of our first kindergarten in Asmara, Eritrea

In August 2008, it was finally accomplished: our first kindergarten in the slums of Asmara opened its doors to the children. In addition, we were able to open a CfT office in downtown Asmara for the quality control and development of our project work in Eritrea.

Stefanie Graf visited Eritrea for the kindergarten opening to get an impression of the conditions and progress on site. Read more about this project on page 5.



New Foundation Headquarters in Hamburg

An important step has been taken in the Foundation's development with the beginning of a building project in Hamburg. A new building on the grounds of the University of Hamburg Medical Center will house both the Outpatient Clinic for Refugee Children and their Families and the Foundation's headquarters. Furthermore, a new on-site institute is in planning. In addition to establishing an international Expert Network, its emphasis will be on the training and professional development of therapists and crisis area workers.

Along with the financial dedication of the Genworth Donation, numerous material donations by participating construction companies and the provision of office communication facilities by T-Systems, the office furnishing company LOTOS Manufaktur is not only drawing up a concept for the interior design, but also providing us with furniture for the new offices.

CfT starts a new project in Uganda



Gulu Town, Uganda

For over 20 years, Northern Ugandans have lived in the turmoil of warfare between the rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Ugandan Army. During this period, estimates indicate that over 25.000 child soldiers have been forcibly recruited. The number of murders, rapes and torture incidents committed against civilians is difficult to assess, but is estimated at over the ten thousands.

In a region devastated by years of civil war, with an instable infrastructure and, despite an official end of the war, around 1,4 million people living in refugee camps under deplorable conditions, there is a generation growing up for whom violence has always been present, and has never known times of peace.

With our new project, Children for Tomorrow aims to contribute to the re-integration of war-traumatized children, particularly of former child soldiers, into civilian society. This project is described in closer detail on page 7.



Explaining the children's concerns

In memory of Prof. Dr. med. Peter Riedesser

Hubertus Adam, Medical Director

The Outpatient Clinic for Refugee Children and their Families is a specialist clinic that is financed by our foundation and works in close cooperation with the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Psychotherapy in the University of Hamburg Medical Center.

Prof. Peter Riedesser MD was Director of the Clinic for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and an executive board member of Children for Tomorrow. His sudden death on 19 September was a great loss for both the Foundation and the clinic, and has had a great impact on our work in the Outpatient Clinic in the past months.

Much of his extensive work was dedicated to the topic of "psychological trauma in children" in medicine, teaching and research. Due to his untiring efforts in the realms of politics and society, he was able to build the necessary structures for his project ideas, and to ensure their prompt implementation. He was particularly committed to realizing his ideas for the clinical care of traumatized children. Professor Riedesser was a great catalyst, who drove things forward and brought people together. As a Child Psychiatrist and Psychoanalyst, he determinedly encouraged the consideration of new findings in developmental psychology in diagnostics and therapy of psychopathological phenomena, and believed strongly in employing individual and family resources. The Outpatient Clinic benefited enormously from his efforts.

It takes a village to raise a child. Professor Riedesser was very fond of the message conveyed in this saying. With his death, the children of our world village have lost a passionate advocate. However, the lasting impact of his efforts to explain the children's concerns to the adult world, his belief that the right convictions will spread of their own accord, and his dedication to the education of colleagues is sure to show itself in our foundation's future work – as well as in the many other places where he was active.



Housewarming for Asmara's first kindergarten

CFT provides treatment facilities for 300 children

Jörg Fischer, Vice Chairman



Our kindergarten in Asmara

Although the mills in Eritrea may grind slowly at times, we were able to celebrate the opening of Asmara's first CFT kindergarten in August 2008.

The building at the edge of Asmara's slums is set on a hill and can be easily spotted from afar. The slum dwellers speak with pride of the new house as a place where many of their children will receive care in the future. A parent committee has been formed for the selection of children for kindergarten placement, in collaboration with the foundation and local authorities. Up to 300 children can be cared for in our kindergarten, which also includes a special room for therapy.

At the end of last year, the project opened a "Children for Tomorrow" office in downtown Asmara, an essential basis for further project development and establishing more kindergartens. Our local project manager, Ms. Merih Negassi, is working closely with the responsible authorities in the Eritrean Ministry of Education on planning kindergartens in Adi Keyh and Massawa.

The difficult situation in this country often becomes evident in the project's progress; repeated building material shortages, capacity restraints and administrative problems that delay the development of a sound infrastructure, along with the challenge of finding well trained personnel. At the same time, the children's living conditions, severely impacted by food shortage and poverty, are a constant reminder of how important the foundation's efforts are in this country. Alone in the slums of Asmara, where the poorest of the

poor live, the proportion of children between 0 and 6 years old is over 20%. Without our support, most of them will have no means of escaping an otherwise predestined future of extreme hardship. In short, there is a lot to be done.



The Slums of Asmara



SOUTH AFRICA

Playing together against poverty and violence

„Kicking for Peace“ – a psychosocial project in the townships of Cape Town

Kerstin Stellermann, Project Manager South Africa

The freeway from Cape Town’s airport passes through the dense townships on the way to the city, and if you arrive in the afternoon you are sure to see children of all ages playing soccer as you drive by. Boys and girls, usually barefoot, training passionately amid the enthusiastic cheers of the township dwellers – soccer: an international hobby of all generations.

Children for Tomorrow has been at work in Cape Town since 1998. The township of Langa (“Sun” in the Xhosa language) is the oldest black township in the Western Cape region. The foundation has rented two rooms in the culture center “Guga S’Thebe” to provide

ons is not an option – hardly any of the children in our partner schools in Langa have contact to children from the neighboring “colored” township of Bonteheuwel, even though the two townships are merely separated by a two-lane road - a nevertheless impassible boundary for the children. The language barrier presents a great obstacle, although all children learn both Afrikaans and Xhosa from the first grade at school since 1995. But it is the fear, prejudice and mistrust spawned by Apartheid and passed down through the generations that are particularly evident in how these children perceive and act towards each other.

In 2004, Children for Tomorrow started a network – “Western Cape Network for Community, Peace and Development” with other organizations that promote children’s, adolescents’ and women’s development, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. It was in this network that the idea and initiative “Kicking for Peace” was developed in 2006. Our aim is to create safe spaces for children where they can pursue adequate pastimes that are fit for their age and promote their development. The “Children for Tomorrow” team in Langa is made up of twenty boys and fifteen girls from ages eleven to fourteen. They meet on a weekly basis to practice with youth coaches who have been trained in our project and are supported by our psychologists. Several boys and girls on the Langa team are in psychological treatment with us, which means that along with their enthusiasm for soccer, they also share the experience of having survived violence and losing people they were close to. Being on the soccer team and participating in the regular talks that follow creates a common network that further supports their psychological recovery.

With the support of the German Consulate and Cape Town Department for Social Development, we were able to hold the first “Kicking for Peace” tournament in Langa in November 2006. Four girl’s and nine boy’s teams from different townships in Cape Town gathered with us to play for the “Kicking for Peace” trophy. Singing the South African national anthem brought harmony to the confusion of languages, and the children held that pitch throughout the tournament. Joint psychosocial camps are planned for the teams for 2009, aimed at reinforcing friendships among the children, as well as strengthening their social competencies and providing them with a safe space in which they can find expression and names for their conflicts and work on these together.



Soccer tournament in Langa



In October 2008, the Children for Tomorrow Girl’s Team won the “Kicking for Peace” trophy

children and families who suffer from the effects of poverty and violence with psychological and psychotherapeutic support free of cost, in a protected and non-stigmatizing space.

Many of the children we have been lucky enough to get to know have told us about how much they enjoy playing soccer after school and at the weekends. They tell us about self-organized training sessions, their desire to compete, but also about the lack of material – and about their fears and the violence. Old gang structures often underlie the team formations, and illegal betting often becomes part of the game. Playing with children from other regi-

News from the projects



„I have no idea how I’m going to manage it all“

Children for Tomorrow starts a new project in Uganda

Fionna Klasen, Project Manager Uganda

“I remember exactly how it happened” tells us Francis, a 14-year old boy (name has been changed). “I had just woken up and was washing my face, when the rebels came. They set our hut on fire and killed my father. The rebels grabbed me and dragged me away with them.” At the time, Francis was barely 10 years old. During his time with the rebels, he witnessed his friends being murdered in combat. He was forced to loot villages and beat other children to death with sticks when they had attempted to escape. After three years, Francis was able to flee. Today, his greatest wish is to be able to go to school again and to become a driver or a mechanic. “But I have no idea how I am going to manage it all” says Francis, as we part.

The fighting between the rebels of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and the Ugandan Army began in 1986. Since then, the LRA has forcibly recruited an estimated 25,000 children as soldiers and is responsible for ten thousands of crimes of murder, mutilation, rape and torture committed against civilians.

Since signing a ceasefire agreement in August 2006, the situation has improved in Northern Uganda, but to date, a peace agreement

has yet to be signed. The rebel leaders of the LRA have been accused of crimes against humanity at the International Criminal Court of Den Haag, and have since retreated to East Congo. In the past months, there have been reports of attacks against civilians in the region, leading to renewed fears of attacks among Northern Ugandans.

In Northern Uganda, there is a generation growing up that has never experienced times of peace. Even today, after the official end of the war, 1.4 million refugees still live in overcrowded camps under inhumane conditions without electricity and running water and are dependent on the World Food Program. Over half of the population is under 18 years old. This severely traumatized generation will form the region’s future. To date, there are no long-term child or adolescent psychiatric or psychotherapeutic services available in Northern Uganda. Children for Tomorrow will begin to close this gap in order to restore hope in children like Francis. So he can learn “how to manage it all”.

Children in a refugee camp





 **KOSOVO**

Broken wings and foreign dances

Multiethnic projects in Kosovo

Birgit Möller, Project Manager Kosovo

Kosovo is a multiethnic state, the largest ethnic group being Albanians, making up about 95% of the population. But it is also home to numerous minorities such as Serbs, Roma, Bosniaks, Ashkali, Sinti, and Turks. Although the promotion of multiethnic coexistence is a declared government endeavor, ethnic groups still tend to keep to themselves, many of them living in social marginalization. For example, there are numerous Roma enclaves in economically depressed areas outside of the towns or villages; in former waste dumps or near dilapidated, environmentally hazardous coal plants. Serb and Albanian districts are also still clearly separated. Many Serbs are afraid to leave their neighborhoods due to fears instilled by Albanian attacks during the upheavals in the past.

Overcoming these unyielding structures is one of Children for Tomorrow's primary aims in contributing to peacebuilding in Kosovo. Since 2006, we have been running a youth project in the city of Gjakova. It began with a retreat in a mountain village: "Youth Building Bridges", with 25 teenagers from different ethnic backgrounds. For many of the participants, the trip to the Rugova Valley was the first time many of them had ever left their hometown or enclave, and they brought with them a great deal of enthusiasm and eagerness to enter into dialogue.

However, extensive persuasion was necessary in the case of many parents, who wanted nothing to do with their Albanian or Serb neighbors. Problems with the villagers on site presented further



Bird with broken wings: Serb teenagers depict their situation in a living sculpture

News from the projects



complications, as they firmly rejected the idea of a multiethnic "Bridgebuilding Camp" in their midst, and threatened with consequences. This being the first such camp of its kind in Kosovo, security measures such as a daily patrol by the local police were arranged to guarantee the safety of the Serb participants.

The initial tension quickly dissipated when the camp began, and it became a huge success. In addition to the teenagers' self-planned leisure time program, which encouraged uncomplicated mingling, various seminars dealing with multiethnic coexistence were held. These reached from Human Rights to Cultural Differences, and were specifically designed to facilitate lively discussion and allow leeway for creativity in concrete, everyday situations. Various roleplay activities made the topics tangible and easy to relate to the teenagers' personal experiences. In the daily Theater Workshop, they collaborated on a self-written piece on multiethnic cooperation that treated both a critical view on the current situation and an alternative scenario. Each day, all participants came together to speak about and reflect on their personal experiences of the camp.

The evening program was planned by the participants; teaching each other songs or dances, or presenting things that they had worked on in their groups was a great booster for uncomplicated, lively interaction, but also opened eyes and ears for the culture, language and backgrounds of the respective others. For some Albanians, it was the first time to hear of the minorities' difficult living conditions. One group was able to transport how their lives in Kosovo felt to them in a living sculpture depicting a "Bird with Broken Wings," meant to show how confined their enclave felt and how narrow the means for growth into an "adult bird that can take flight" were. This image also expressed the teenagers' conflict between conservative parents and the struggle for autonomy, which was something everyone could identify with. A further sculpture by Roma teenagers showed the situation of a girl whose parents had forbidden to go to school, demanding that she stay home to help her mother in the household and care for her younger siblings. This led to a discussion among the participants on ways of asserting one's will and needs as a teenager, but also about the fears of many



Teenagers enjoying themselves at the camp

Roma of being discriminated against at school.

The war, and what the participants had experienced during that time, was avoided by the teenagers in the first retreat. This was something that they were only able to address once they had gained trust in each other, and eventually became possible in the following camps and ongoing projects in Gjakova. Albanians were able to speak with Serbs and Roma about their war experiences and about having lost their fathers or close relatives. Roma and Serbs were able to share their experiences of persecution and discrimination following the war, and talk about their fears regarding the future.

The Foundation's multiethnic projects have become an established part of social life in Gjakova's community. Our staff and the young participants continue to contribute to promoting dialogue between people of different ethnic backgrounds with theater performances, school events, radio shows and numerous talks with other teenagers and their parents.



EVENTS & MEDIA



Stefanie Graf and Education Minister Semere Russom at the opening ceremony of our first kindergarten

Thanks to the funds collected in the RTL Donation Marathon, we were able to reach essential milestones in our North African project in 2008. A festive ceremony, covered by the Eritrean media and RTL for German television, marked the opening of Children for Tomorrow's first kindergarten in Asmara.

We would like to express our thanks to all viewers of the RTL Donation Marathon for their generous support.

BENEFACTORS AND SPONSORS

Individual interior design concept for the Foundation Building by LOTOS



Robert und Mehrjar Nader, Geschäftsführer von LOTOS

The office furnishing company LOTOS custom designs living and work spaces for their clients in their own factory. Traditional values and new ideas merge in high quality furniture made with expertise based on over 100 years of family craftsmanship. The brothers Robert and Mehrjar Nader, managing directors of LOTOS and their employees are not only devoted to their clients' satisfaction; for

years, they have dedicated themselves to the social well being of children in and around Hamburg. "When children are suffering hardships, helping them is the natural thing for us to do," as Robert Nader describes his company's stance.

For the new Foundation building, Lotos will draw up and implement an individual interior design concept that caters specifically to the needs of the young patients and their therapists.

BOOK TIP



Journal: „Frühe Kindheit / die ersten sechs Jahre“ („Early Childhood / the first six years“)

This journal is an interdisciplinary specialist journal on infants and small children. It is directed at professionals from the areas of social pediatrics, obstetrics, child psychiatry, developmental psychology, early education, social work, family law, family sociology and child- and family politics, as well as those responsible in politics and interested parents. "Frühe Kindheit" / "early childhood" (only available in German) is also the news outlet of the "German Children's League". It is published every two months and available per subscription or as single copies

"Frühe Kindheit" / "early childhood" is an open forum in the triangle of science, practice and politics. Specialist articles, practice reports and news take the same importance as opinions, comments and reviews.



RAJA'S STORY

When witches lose their witchcraft, and parents turn into ghosts

Hubertus Adam, Medical Director

When five-year-old Raja (name has been changed) comes to her therapy session in the Outpatient Clinic in Hamburg, the friendly atmosphere and colorful array of playthings still don't really make her want to play. Once she sits down on the children's chair, dressed all in pink, she is no longer a nice little girl. In a fierce and commanding voice, she orders her therapist to "Look what I'm doing – you cannot speak, your arms and legs are paralyzed, you can't move at all!" In role-play, Raja turns her therapist into the little witch, who, as she says, has lost "all of her magical powers" and must watch helplessly as all of the finger puppets drown tragically in the candy jar, one after the other, or the princess's treasure is imperiled by evil powers.

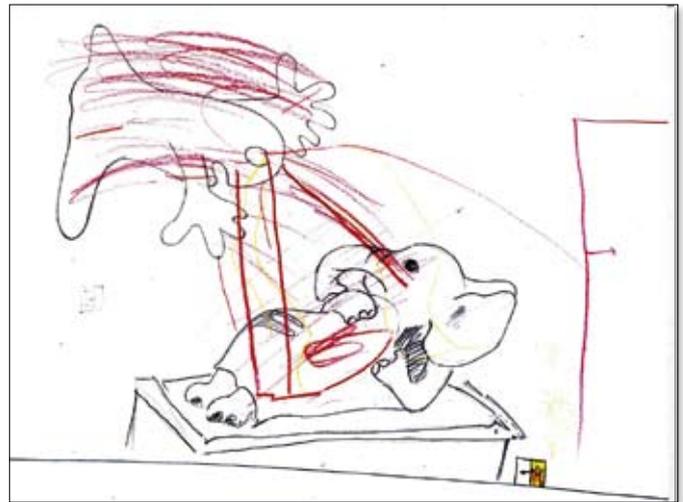
This fantasy play has an unnatural, forced, character it repeats itself again and again and has lost all playfulness. It is what we call "traumatic play" and a common symptom in the aftermath of traumatic experiences in children. For Raja, it is of existential importance that the therapist experience what she herself has been through: the feeling of being helplessly and powerlessly exposed to an extreme situation.

Rajas Family is from Chechnya and had to flee from the Russian military in Grosny in 2004. Raja was two and a half years old when she and her mother were forced to watch as Russian soldiers, wearing masks, broke down the family's front door and dragged her father away. When Mr. A. was released after weeks of torture, his wife could hardly recognize him. Even today, Raja's 33-year-old father feels like a different man. He often just sits there, can't speak, can't move his legs and feels "emotionally numb", as his wife described in our first consultation. Since the war, Raha also became withdrawn, was afraid of strangers and could only sleep if she was lying right next to her father. She wouldn't let him out of her sight and was constantly impelled to pat him as if to reassure herself that he was actually there. Raja's mother told us that she also hardly recognized herself. Because Chechnya is a part of Russia, there is a possibility that the family could be deported to Russia or back to Chechnya. For fear of this, Raja's mother says, she can hardly sleep, loses patience quickly and constantly reminds her daughter to be quiet.

It is not only the experience of existential threat that has so deeply imprinted itself in Raja's conscious – it is also the loss of the magic of unburdened childhood. Around the age of three, emotionally healthy children live out their own ideas of all-powerfulness in fantasy and play: dwarves, angels, witches, magicians and ghosts live in their imagination, and can cast spells that magically change the world around them. But the critical difference is: the good always wins. Traumatic experiences in early childhood can disrupt the developing child's emotional balance and jeopardize their trust

in the good powers of their imaginary world. When this happens, they lose their magical power to make the good side win.

Raja and her parents have been in treatment in our outpatient clinic for two years. Psychodynamic psychotherapy, which helps children like Raja learn how to make traumatic events understandable and controllable, is part of our therapeutic program. A further treatment element are regular parent talks in close intervals – if necessary with the help of interpreters – in which family dynamics and disorder-specific aspects are treated under consideration of cultural identity, in order to strengthen the family's ties and resources.



Raja's picture of "the blood-spurting ghost", drawn together with the therapist in one of her therapy sessions

Just a while ago, Raja celebrated her seventh birthday, along with her first day of school. Her parents have learnt how to create spaces where the terror of the past does not play a role. Raja now sleeps in her own bed and, much to her mother's joy, hardly notices when her father leaves the house. Playing with her younger siblings and friends has become more important. On her birthday, Raja proudly brought her therapist a picture she had drawn and happily chattered: "Can you remember when I used to think that Papa was a ghost and I was afraid of witches?"



CONTACT

Should you wish to make contact with Children for Tomorrow, we would be pleased to hear from you!

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Thank You

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as well as our volunteers for their continuous dedication.**

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Overall Responsibility: Joerg Fischer, Att. Köln **Editorial Management:** Stephanie Hermes

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Photo Credits: Joerg Fischer, Köln (p. 1, 2, 5, 6, 8), UKE/Prof. Debatin (p. 2), Hubertus Adam (p. 7), Stephanie Hermes (p. 2),
Wonique Dreyer (S. 4), Fionna Klasen (p. 3, 5), Urim Deva (p. 3), LOTOS (p. 3), Kerstin Stellermann (p. 4), Birgit Möller (p. 5), RTL (p. 6)

Design: Design Labor, Britta Stahl, Mannheim [www.design-labor.de]

Circulation: Pro Design, Hamburg [www.prodesign-hh.de] **Auflage:** 1.000 subject to alteration