



## PRESS RELEASE

Künzelsau/Cologne, 29. November 19

### Exemplifying responsibility:

International managers of the Berner Group pack 1,000 St. Nicholas Day sacks for children from socially disadvantaged areas

- 126 aid projects throughout Europe since 2016
- Donation volume of 1.2 million euros
- Berner Group employees act as “full service” donors

**23 countries. 120 international managers. 17 childcare facilities:** As part of an international specialist conference in Cologne, Berner Group managers from all over Europe showed once again that social commitment is a high priority within the family business. Despite the tight conference schedule, they did not miss the opportunity to prepare a special St. Nicholas Day surprise worth over 11,000 euros for around 1,000 children from Cologne childcare facilities this year. Emerging from a team challenge, social commitment is now an integral part of the annual management conference. The project is only one of more than 120 projects that Berner Group companies are implementing throughout Europe.

Christmas is just around the corner. A time for contemplation and gifts, both large and small. But for thousands of families in Cologne, it is also a time when poverty can be felt more than ever. In households without the financial means for basic supplies from mid-month on, there simply isn't the money for pre-Christmas treats. Those who suffer most are often the children. So Berner Group managers, including the entire Executive Board, joined forces in several teams to fill St. Nicholas Day sacks with regional products, including paint sets and handmade gingerbread cookie elves baked by Kölner Dom-Spekulatius. The Cologne association “Helfen durch Geben – Der Sack e.V.” proved to be a strong and reliable partner, liaising with the daycare facilities and actively supporting the project. For more than 20 years, the association has been supporting selected families with non-perishable food donations and providing a healthy breakfast every day in 17 childcare facilities located in socially disadvantaged areas. In addition to a donation in kind worth over 8,000 euros, CEO Christian Berner honored the work of “Sack e.V.” on site with a donation check of a further 3,000 euros. As a special surprise for the many helpers, the St. Nicholas Day sacks were accepted on site by the day-care center directors, accompanied by some of the children.

#### **Everyone should be ready to accept social responsibility**

More than ever, the Berner Group stands behind its assumption that the company's greatest successes are measured by the positive impact it has on people, society and the environment. For this reason, social responsibility is an integral part of the Berner Group's corporate culture and is deeply anchored in its DNA. “Everyone should be ready to accept social responsibility wherever possible – whether in a private or a professional context. I am therefore looking forward to 36 further projects that we will jointly implement in 2019/2020,” said Christian Berner, who heads the Berner Group in the second generation.

For the third year in a row, employees of the commercial enterprise are engaging in social projects throughout Europe. 36 projects are being planned in ten countries until the spring of 2020 and beyond. With a donation volume of 1.2 million euros since 2017, some 1,500 volunteers and 126 social projects in 23 European countries, the Berner Group has remained true to its social objectives.



### **Project selection and distribution**

The focus is on social facilities in the direct vicinity of the B2B trading company's locations. Furthermore, the sustainability of the commitment plays an important role. It is not a matter of merely donating a sum of money and thus fulfilling a target. The facilities proposed by employees are supported by manpower, products from the full product range of all subsidiaries and a six-figure donation.

The family business acts not only as a partner and helping hand in the implementation of the projects, but also as a full-service donor: in addition to cash, employees can draw on the entire product portfolio of the B2B trading company for social projects. From professional tools for tradesmen through equipment for automotive workshops to special cleaning agents – the Berner Group's products and specialist solutions make it a reliable and experienced partner for social projects.

### **Further projects in Cologne and its environs**

At the Cologne location, the family business will support the Max Ernst High School in Bocklemünd to redesign and set up a sustainability shop run by schoolchildren. In addition, an extensive nature educational relandscaping of the outdoor area of a daycare facility of the SKM Familienzentrum Bocklemünd is being planned for the spring of 2020.

Kindergarteners at Elterninitiative Drachenkinder e.V. in Königswinter can look forward to a renovated kitchen from December onwards that complies with fire safety regulations. The Berner Group is providing products from its entire range, as well as the dedicated support of its employees to dismantle and reconstruct the kitchen.

In May 2019, the Caramba Group successfully carried out a project with the SOS Children's Village in Düsseldorf. Here, volunteers painted rooms on two days, removed graffiti with the use of the company's own special cleaning agents, and whipped the outside area into shape. The Berner Group holding company is also lending a hand in Düsseldorf. Over the course of a day of action at the Repair Café in Benrath in January, it will provide a team and a generous donation of tools to make sure that repairs can be carried out.

### **Projects throughout Germany**

In the Hohenlohe region, the headquarters of the family business, numerous helpers will also participate. Joint aid campaigns are planned with the Hohenlohekreis Employment Initiative, which acts as a "bridge to employment" for the re-integration of needy target groups. A shop redesign at the social welfare organization Künzelsauer Tafel is also planned.

Following big successes over the past two years, BTI employees decided to support the Albert Schweitzer Children's Village in Waldenburg for the third time in a row. In October 2019, volunteers laid out a new section of the garden and renovated the playground. On another two days in October, volunteers built a wooden pavilion and a large swing for the Klinge Seckbach children's home.

On Sylt, a team from Berner is preparing a creative room for patients of the Sylt Clinic rehabilitation center for families with children suffering from cancer.

Focusing on the long term, the subsidiary Caramba will continue its cooperation with the Mainz homeless shelter and the "Caramba Goes to School" project. Here, real-life workshops and current application examples bring the contents of chemistry lessons to life for schoolchildren.



## **The Berner Group**

The Berner Group is a family-run European commercial enterprise. Our vision is: “We keep the world together and moving.” This means we are the central B2B trading partner for all materials in the maintenance, repair, and production segments for our customers in the building, mobility, and industry sectors. With more than four channels we create an integrated omni-channel purchasing experience for our customers. We are also an innovative manufacturer in the steel, C materials as well as chemicals segments. We serve our customers with over 200,000 items and 8,200 employees in over 23 countries.

## **Helfen durch Geben – der Sack e.V.**

Helfen durch Geben – der Sack e.V. lends a hand in Cologne. The association delivers non-perishable food on a monthly basis to 900 addresses and provides healthy breakfasts in 17 childcare facilities every day. The association has been supporting socially disadvantaged families in Cologne on a voluntary basis for 20 years. The employees are also involved in many other social issues, in keeping with the association’s motto: “Helping by giving”.