

GoTeach – go far. The magic of mentoring

Nisa Ebrahim and Keeper Bonase met five years ago, and a special relationship began. She was a mentor from the GoTeach program of Deutsche Post DHL Group and he was a young man from an SOS Children's Village. Today, he's a mentor, she's an ambassador– and he's like a son to her. >>>



2012

They were both excited. “And confused,” Keeper Bonase says. Nisa Ebrahim was moved the first time she saw the 19-year-old man from the SOS Children’s Village in Cape Town. Ebrahim, a DHL Global Forwarding, Freight employee from that same city, got to know him through GoTeach. The program was an opportunity for her to do more. “More” in this case ended up meaning mentoring Bonase for years.

In the beginning, he was cautious. His life had been too much of a revolving door, with people here one day and gone the next. But Ebrahim was different. “If you make a promise, you have to keep it,” says Ebrahim, who works as Product Head for Risk Management and Cargo Insurance - Middle East, Africa for DGFF. She helped him with his everyday problems, with school, with anything that came up. “She visited all the time,” Bonase says. Even on Saturday mornings to get him and his friends out of bed.

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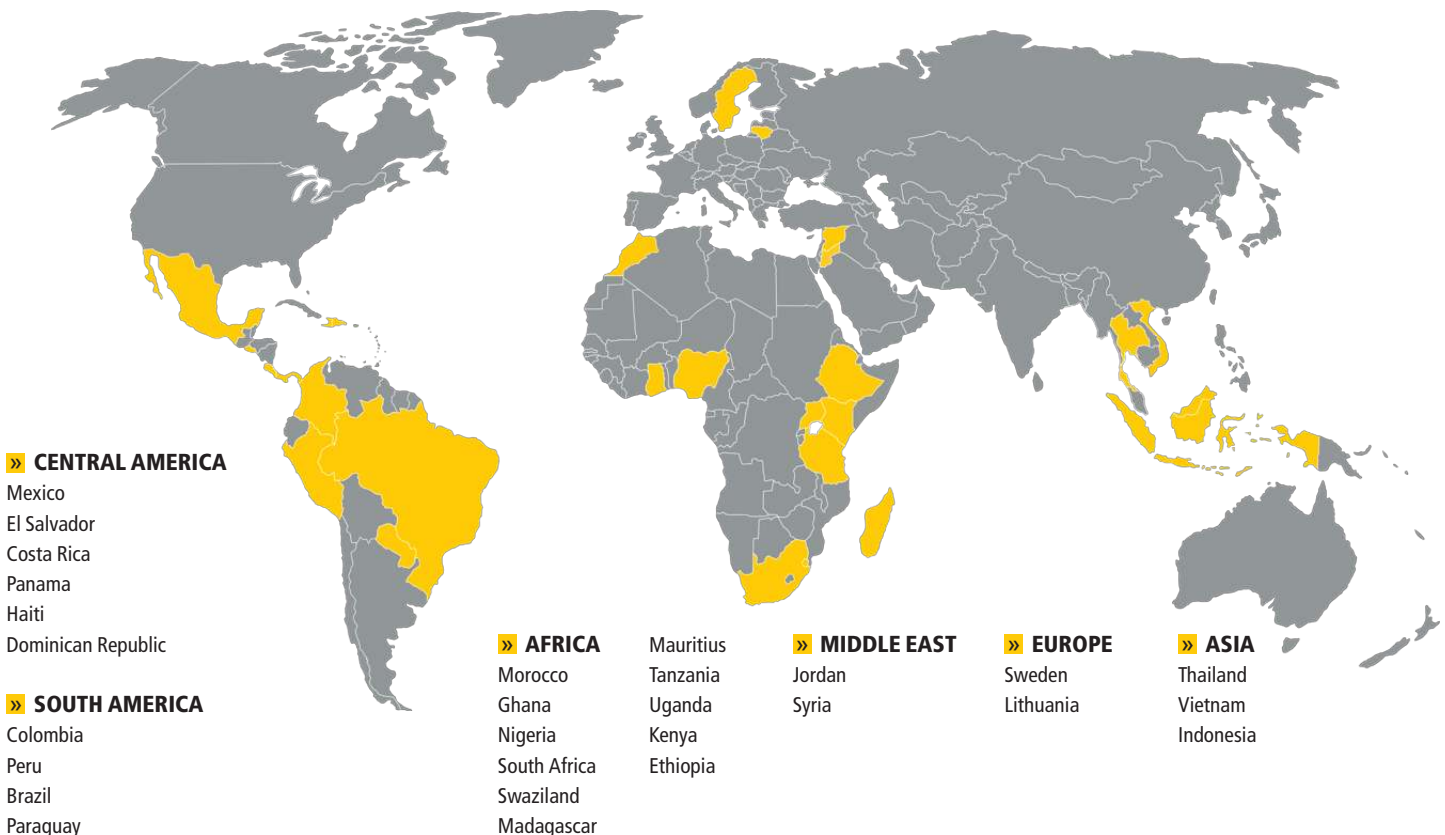
NISA EBRAHIM

Slowly, his mistrust began to crumble. “It took quite a while,” says Bonase. “He was testing me,” Ebrahim says. How could he know what was clear to her from the very start? That she was in the program for the long haul and that she would be helping him for a long time to come. Right away, she liked him, and GoTeach, too. “It’s very clearly structured,” she says.

2013

Bonase finally graduated from high school. His next step was “a shock” for his mentor, but he viewed it as an opportunity: Bonase wanted to train at DHL. Ebrahim sensed a huge responsibility – and accepted it. The path was long and difficult, and Bonase worked for three arduous years while continuing his studies. He struggled in the beginning, Ebrahim explains: “It was no easy road, but he kept on going.” He faltered at one point. Working and studying at the same time began to weigh heavily on him. One day the pressure became too great. “I don’t want to do this anymore,” Bonase told

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A walk together down at the harbor in Cape Town. Nisa Ebrahim and Keeper Bonase meet regularly to catch up with each other.

her. “Keep calm,” Ebrahim answered. “Take a few days off first and then decide.” He found his way back and completed the training program. Afterwards, and officially, he was now a “freight forwarding specialist in operations.”

2015

At the SOS Children’s Village in Cape Town, a lot of the other young people wanted to know what DHL did exactly. Bonase shared what he knew – then he himself became a mentor in the GoTeach program. He underwent more training, completed the entire mentoring program, and studied the ins and outs of DPDHL Group’s Code of Conduct.

Now he was the one motivating others. Ebrahim also played a part in that: “To see people like her,” Bonase begins to explain, “People who do so much and expect so little for it ...” At this, Ebrahim begins to cry, then smiles and says, “He is simply extraordinary.”

For Bonase, being a mentor is like a window into the past. “You see yourself,” Bonase says. “That’s the voice of experience,” Ebrahim adds. He knows the young people in the SOS Children’s Village in Cape Town. It’s where he’s from. He speaks their language. “And they understand what I mean,” says he.

2016

Bonase, both a mentee and a mentor now, has earned a permanent position with Deutsche Post DHL Group. “I fell in love with the ocean freight business,” he says. “Ocean freight isn’t so fast-paced. You can plan it.” Planning is important to Bonase. Even if he prefers not to look too far into the future.

2017

Now, at the age of 24, Bonase has made his first international trip for DPDHL Group, to the Post Tower in Bonn, Germany. There he came across a self-assured young man, a bit shy, but not in every respect. He claims, for example, to be a “much better” mentor than Ebrahim. He has taken on 11 mentees from her. “Back then I had to convince him,” Ebrahim says. “Now he doesn’t need to convince his mentees anymore.”

Ebrahim has become an ambassador for the GoTeach program. “Keeper was the most difficult to convince – he was my first mentee,” she says, even though she had devoted time and energy into helping other young people earlier in life. That was her upbringing, she says. She was taught to help, to share. Referring to Bonase, she says, “We persevered, both of us.” She was always there for him, then and now. Bonase is still Ebrahim’s mentee. And more than that: “He’s like a son to me,” she says. <



Growing together: Keeper Bonase is now himself a mentor. Nisa Ebrahim has become an ambassador for GoTeach.

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