



Paul Leander-Engström is constantly on the move, finding new humanitarian and environmental projects to support.

He was a pioneer in the Russian market and started the mutual fund Prosperity Capital. Today **Paul Leander-Engström** (Class of '89) divides his time between writing novels, the charity fund 3W and the investment company Ture Invest.

Giving it away

➔ **FIVE HUNDRED PAGES** are piled neatly on Paul Leander-Engström's well-filled desk. He is in the final stages of writing a novel and publication is planned for 2010, assuming he lives up to his publisher's demanding requirements.

"I began writing the book just before I turned 40. I had had enough of round-the-clock financial dealings," says Leander-Engström.

Above all, however, he wanted to describe what he had experienced in his tumultuous years in Russia. "I also quickly realized that I would have to do it as fiction, if anyone was going to want to read it," he adds.

Leander-Engström's interest in Russia began during secondary school, when he learned that an interpreter school was an alternative to military training. He applied and was accepted, which resulted in a career that began in the Swedish Embassy's defense department in Moscow from 1987 to 1988.

"That was during Perestroika, Glasnost and Gorbachev, which was a very exciting period," he says.

After his year in Moscow he studied economics at SSE and also studied law at Stockholm University. He then took a job at the consulting company McKinsey but was not particularly happy.

"I realized that so much analysis did not suit me. I am more of a doer. I want to see things happen," Leander-Engström says. And happen, they did. In 1993, he was offered a job and a partnership at the Brunswick investment bank in Moscow. "We were extremely early and had to start building from scratch," he says.

AFTER A FEW YEARS, he left the bank and,

together with Mattias Westman (Class of '89), started the asset management company Prosperity Capital, which focused on investments in Russia. Paul describes the first years as a roller-coaster ride, suffering through both the Asian crisis in 1997 and the Russian crisis in 1998.

"We succeeded in making Prosperity Capital the world's largest Russian asset management company and had assets valued at USD 5 billion when I sold my share in 2007," Leander-Engström remarks.

The timing was fortuitous from a financial standpoint. Part of the money from the sale has been invested in his own charity fund 3W – the World We Want – which focuses on women and children in developing countries and on ecology and the environment.

"If you have been lucky enough to succeed financially and have the means to survive, you have to ask what keeps you going. For me, it was the book project for my own personal satisfaction – and charity, so that the money would provide some help," he says, adding that, in working with the foundation, he tries to apply some of his investment experience.

"I look for aid projects that are well-defined, limited in scope and run by skilled entrepreneurs, which in this case means social entrepreneurs who put their soul into what they do."

AMONG THE PROJECTS that 3W supports, the largest are in India. One of these provides about SEK 1 million to help some 1,500 casteless women who collect waste to survive. The ambition is to get them jobs. In Russia, 3W supports nine orphanages, and in Africa, the foundation provides both humanitarian and environmental aid for such causes as

street children in Sudan, farming women in Uganda and tree planting in Cameroon.

"I see 3W as a portfolio in which we will have a number of wholly owned projects with full control and a number of support projects where we provide assistance by networking with others," Leander-Engström explains.

The vision is to build a family foundation that his daughters, today aged five and seven, will one day take over.

"If they can see that animals, people or an entire village have been helped by our foundation, I believe that they will feel very proud. It will give them basic values and a broader perspective on what money is for," reflects Leander-Engström, who believes that he will always have one foot in the business world. Today, that foot is in Ture Invest, where he is one of five private owners.

SUSANNA LIDSTRÖM

PAUL LEANDER-ENGSTRÖM

Age: 42

Education: MSc in Economics from SSE and Bachelor of Law, Stockholm University

Family: Girlfriend and two daughters

Residence: House in Djursholm and apartment in downtown Stockholm

On his environmental conscience: Personal air travel

Most recently read book: *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini