Climate for Peace
INSPIRATIONS

How to organize activities for climate justice and sustainable living

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Introduction

Service Civil International was created to respond to challenges of contemporary times and with time these challenges have evolved. Today climate change impacts are one of the main threats to human rights and at the same time they provide an amazing opportunity. As it becomes more and more obvious that people need to take action in order to prevent catastrophic climate change, as well as unite to face its inevitable impacts, climate justice movement is rising all over the world.

Activists of branches and partners of SCI respond to this global call for action in many creative and exciting ways. No matter if it is a massive long-term international project or a one-time film screening for the members of local community, with every step that we take, we are getting closer to solving the climate crisis and creating a culture of peace.

This publication was developed to acknowledge the amazing work that SCI members are tirelessly undertaking in their communities, as well as to provide inspiration to those, who are still searching for their way to join in the global climate movement.

Described projects were implemented in Europe and beyond in the final months of 2014 and throughout 2015, and in most cases the total cost of the project was €500 or less. Financial resources for their implementation were provided by the European Youth Foundation, Terra21 Foundation and Service Civil International. The texts promoting particular forms of community engagement were developed by participants of the "Regional Re-ACTION workshop – Prishtina and Plemetina" (Kosovo, April 2015), the "Resilient Communities Workshop" (Warsaw, August 2015) and the "Refresh the Climate, Rewrite the Future" workshop (Berlin, September 2015), which were financed by the European Youth Foundation as part of the "Create a Climate for Peace: Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Europe" Workplan 2015 project.

We dedicate these pages to all of you, who understand the importance of civil society voice in the global climate debate and are courageous enough to raise their voice and devote their energy to creating the change, which we need to see in order to preserve the livable Earth for young and future generations!

Amities,
Create a Climate for Peace Campaign Team

CREATE A CLIMATE FOR PEACE CAMPAIGN

Service Civil International is a pacifist organization and nowadays it is impossible to strive for peace without tackling the issue of climate change causes and impacts. Climate change threatens human rights – from farmers forced out of their lands by desertification or excessive flooding, through people seeking refuge from conflicts escalated by climate change impacts (like scarce access to food or water), to those living in low lying islands that are literally disappearing under water as a result of rising sea levels.

At the same time every year SCI organizes hundreds of events involving thousands of volunteers. The goal of Create a Climate for Peace Campaign is to incorporate the perspective of climate justice and sustainable living[1] into all aspects and activities of the projects. Even if at first sight the project seems not related to those topics, there are some links to be found for sure (because climate change underlies all other aspects of life). You are organizing a workcamp with refugee children? The study part can concern the link between climate change and migration! You are restoring an old farmhouse? Ask people from the neighbourhood about solutions from their past that were simple and nature-friendly. And especially if you are looking for a project to get involved in – consider ones that contribute to climate protection and that promote sustainability!

[1] **Sustainable living** means balancing environmental, social and economic priorities in a way that does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. **Climate justice** stresses climate change as an ethical issue affecting livelihoods and rights of humans today, the whole of nature and future generations.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT FOR A SUSTAINABLE EUROPE

In 2015 SCI was granted a project from the European Youth Foundation (EYF) called "Create a Climate for Peace: Youth Empowerment for a Sustainable Europe". The aim of the project was to further spread and implement a concept and practice of sustainability which is open, inclusive, fair and respectful of diversity (human and natural), while increasing participation and social cohesion. The activities of the project spanned over the whole year and included, in addition to a prep meeting, 3 Re-ACTIONS (regional workshops that took places in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe), and a final visibility event (that took place in Paris during the United Nations climate summit, also referred to as COP21). The 3 Re-ACTIONS (held in Kosovo, Poland and Germany) aimed at discussing and practicing challenges and alternatives related to climate change causes and impacts from a regional perspective. Locations were chosen as to be relevant for the specific topics tackled by the overall project – communities and groups directly affected by climate injustice (Kosovo) and locations that are proposing alternative ways of living (Germany and Poland). As a direct result of the activation of participants from the 3 Re-ACTIONS, a number of local follow up activities took place to raise awareness and stimulate further participation around the topics of sustainability and peace. These included: courses for kids at school in Germany; a study tour and activities at an ecovillage in Sweden; an educational campaign at schools about the environmental impacts of producing and disposing of plastic bags in Albania; a cycle of events aimed to increase awareness and capacity of workcamp coordinators and educators running workshops in schools in Poland; movie screening and exhibitions in Italy; an active climate justice weekend in Kosovo; and more! All of them offered the possibility to the young people involved to bring home what they learned, become inspired to help bring about positive change in the world and to link with their peers. You can find out more about some of these inspirational activities in the following section of this booklet.

For more info about the project and all the activities, please check our website: http://www.sci.ngo/climate4peace-eyf-2015

For more info about projects supported by EYF:
http://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation

Educate!

"Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world."
Nelson Mandela

Why organize a workshop or another educational activity?[1]

- **It empowers people to find more information and create their own solutions.** Remember that in a good workshop or discussion you don't have all the best answers. You can ask people questions that will get them thinking and wanting to find more information about an issue.
- **You can give new tools to your activists or mobilise new people to join your efforts, transforming them into actors of social change.** A workshop, a discussion, a lecture or a webinar after a film screening are all perfect opportunities to tell other why specific issues are important to you, learn what others think about it and let them know how they can get involved.
- **You can involve everyone.** If you use interactive and non-formal education methods, even people who already know a lot on the topic can get engaged and learn new things from other participants. And if you apply appropriate tools or select a good movie, you can reach out to people of all ages, experience and mental capabilities.
- **You can do it anywhere.** To organize a workshop you don't need to depend on a fancy conference room – you can even have it outside, in the nature, just remember to adjust the programme to the conditions. Especially during a workcamp having a specific time slot dedicated to these kind of activities is important (devote an entire afternoon in your programme to it so that people can be relaxed and focused).

What resources will you need?

It will depend on what goals you define for your activity, but often you can simply do with what is available at hand. It is important that you prepare all necessary materials (usually listed in the description of the activity) beforehand. However in most cases you will need:

- a workshop room or a quiet space outdoors;
- big sheets of paper and markers, other office materials like post-it notes, glue, colourful paper, scissors;
- a projector and speakers; and
- the "Climate for Peace Toolkit" with information about climate justice, sustainable living and suggestions for workshop activities[2].

Who can be your target audience?

Depending on the goals you want to achieve (remember to start planning every workshop and film screening by defining your goals for it!), you can invite:

- activists from your organization;
- members of your local community; or
- anyone who responds to your invitation.

Also remember that a study part is an essential element of every workcamp. You can tie the topic of climate justice and sustainable lifestyle into every workcamp, by proposing activities from the "Climate for Peace Toolkit" and/or a film screening followed by a discussion.

[1] Of course every activity should have certain educational value to it, but some types are particularly focused with education as their goal.

[2] Available at: http://www.sci.ngo/climate-justice-campaign/toolkit.

FILM SCREENINGS

For the list of film titles suggested for screenings check out the "Climate for Peace Toolkit".

Ingrained Cinema (Katowice, Poland)

"Ingrained Cinema" was a series of five film screenings followed by discussions. These were quality, recommended documentaries, some available online for free (like "In Transition 2.0" or "Disruption") and others rented online just for the screenings. The meetings gathered students, activists, artists, people enthusiastic about natural building and complete strangers. "I managed to build a routine and a group of people, who came to every screening, became passionate about the subjects and are now planning to do something together – we want to start a community garden or a permaculture project in the spring", says Emilia Makówka, the project organizer. As a result, the group of most faithful viewers started organizing other events, like a swap party. Emilia continues: "From what I heard from people, they really appreciated the possibility to meet and discuss with like-minded people who are active and care about having a positive impact". The movies focused on practical, local solutions to the overwhelming challenges related to climate change – such as permaculture, Transition Towns initiatives, bike-based transportation models, social entrepreneurship, food co-ops, time banks, exchange networks and so on.

Think global, act local (Antwerp, Vrijwillige Internationale Aktie, Belgium)

VIA Belgium activists challenged themselves to answer the question "Is it possible to live without producing any garbage?". In cooperation with EcoHuis Antwerpen they organized a free screening of the "Clean Bin Project: Documentary Film" followed by a discussion. The motto of the movie is "The number one thing to do is to change one more thing" and it presents the serious topic of waste reduction with optimism, humour, and inspiration for individual action.

"With this event we are trying to raise awareness about climate change and the ecological footprint of our lifestyle in a highly-industrialised and very densely populated country. During our last VIA Weekend, we lived mainly on food that was to be wasted and surplus of local supermarkets. In the future we'd like to continue with these kinds of actions throughout our activities", says Anouk Weyne, one of the organizers. This is why also the discussion was focused mostly on possible solutions, rather than the problem itself. Showing people possible ways to act and defining the vision of the world we want to live in can be a great motivation for changing individual habits and taking action on a wider scale.

WORKSHOPS

Climate justice in VCV Serbia (Fruška Gora National Park, Volunteers' Centre of Vojvodina, Serbia)

A team of activists from VCV Serbia organized a capacity building training for volunteers coming from 10 different Serbian organizations. They met for 5 days in Fruška Gora National Park, where they learned about climate justice and local solutions, like permaculture and reconnecting with nature. All activities combined theoretical input (lectures by a climate scientist, journalist and permaculture expert), documentary movie screenings and as many practical experiences as possible (hiking in the nature, visiting a permaculture farm). "The results of this activity are amazing: we created a working group and an action plan for whole next year to tackle the problem of climate change on the local and national levels", says Jelena Amzirkov, one of the organizers. One of the first activities on the agenda is to create an urban garden in a nearby city (Novi Sad). "We came to realize that within the problem lies the solution and that we have to unite in solving this problems. We also decided to concentrate on these challenges more systematically and with more focus and efficiency", summed up one of the participants.

Strengthening the Capacity of SCI Volunteers and Partner Organization on Climate Change Issues (Kuakata Sea Beach, Patuakhali, SCI Bangladesh)

Activists from SCI Bangladesh joined together with members of other local NGOs, college students and local community to participate in a weekend workcamp that focused on climate change impacts and how to prevent them. The goal of the event was to increase knowledge of climate change related hazards, so that participants can put that knowledge to use and organize activities to protect the climate. They listened to lectures by local experts and had the opportunity to share what they learned with tourists visiting the Kuakata Sea Beach. The impact of climate change is very wide and Bangladesh is on its frontline. "If you think about it, our initiative might seem very small, but we want to be part of the solution. Hopefully through this experience, we will be empowered to take action again and again in the future", says Maniruzzaman Bachchu, one of the organizers. A two-day workcamp followed the training during which participants cleaned the local beach and at the same time informed passers-by about issues related to climate change.

Workshop on Local Resilience and Global Development (Suderbyn Ecovillage, Internationella Arbetslag Sweden)

Suderbyn is an ecovillage in Sweden, which hosts workcamps and long-term volunteers every year. Alisa Sidorenko, one of the villagers, organized a daylong workshop for local university students interested in the topics of sustainability and development. They were up for a day full of information, inspiration and learning by doing. Each activity, from ice breakers, through working in the farm, to organic dinner, had its own focus, but in the end everything came into one big picture: we need to take sustainability into account of all our actions, because what we do on a local level has its implications on the global scale. Theoretical discussions about global development, migration and refugees, a game on worldwide distribution of wealth and poverty, were all combined with practical workshops about taking local actions. The topic of the alternative lifestyle based on ecological, organic and fair sources was followed in all aspects from lunch and homemade baked good to the venue of the meeting.

"One productive day can deepen the understanding of our roles in the global change, as well as make people aware of the variety of approaches that can be applied to make that change happen", says Alisa.

Training on social and environmental impacts of future dams on the River Marañon on Native Amazonian communities (Jaén and the region, SCI Peru)

Planned activities had a very practical dimension and aimed to empower the native community, Tsunsuntsa, and inform them about the consequences of the planned construction of 20 dams on the River Marañon. Three groups of participants took part in the project: volunteers from university of Jaén, members of SCI Peru and of course local community members. Over almost two months, they took part in workshops on social and environmental impacts of planned hydroelectric dams construction, site visits to places where the dams are supposed to be built and meetings with local communities and members of local organizations.

Through the project Amazonian population gained knowledge about plans related to the territories that their livelihoods depend upon. They also got support in formulating a request to the national government to stop the construction of megadams, which are dangerous to the indigenous population and wildlife. "The biggest gain? Developing solidarity and conservation of the environment and biodiversity", says Luciano Troyes Rivera, coordinator of the project.

A day with coffee (Ljubljana, Zavod Voluntariat Slovenia)

Using coffee as a starting point, activists of SCI Slovenia carried out a whole day workshop about responsible consumption. They celebrated World Food Day by sharing their perspective on the importance of knowing the products that we consume and how they impact people and the environment. During the workshop, those that attended learned where coffee comes from and what is its entire production cycle. They were asked to take photos of themselves drinking coffee with inspirational quotes that can raise awareness of responsible consumption through the social media.

Against Climate Change for Peace & Harmony (Chennai, SCI India)

SCI India organized the convention "Against Climate Change for Peace and Harmony". More than 100 participants took part in this 2-day gathering, discussing questions related to climate justice, peace and environment, and preparing future activities to carry out in their local communities.

Pool of workcamp coordinators enrichment (Semarang, Indonesian International Work Camp)

Activists of IIWC organized a 2-day workshop for 30 camp coordinators from their organization. One of the main goals was to bring more elements of climate change knowledge and sustainable living practice to IIWC workcamps. Workcamp coordinators from IIWC are committed to making their projects more sustainable, with managing waste being one of the main challenges, especially relevant in the region.

Think globally, act locally (Cagliari, SCI Italy)

In the working-class district of Cagliari (Sardegna), SCI Italy volunteers brought back the concept of "popular school", where local people joined together to work and to learn from each other. They participated in cleaning actions, workshops about climate justice, a roundtable session about sustainable management of their district and…a recycle kite laboratory! To conclude they decided to claim an abandoned school building, which will serve as a community centre for future popular school sessions.

HOW TO SET UP A VEGAN WORKSHOP

| Urška Fišter

Some things important to keep in mind while preparing a vegan workshop: Many people think vegans are annoying moralistic freaks who want to take over the world, kill all the meat-eaters, recklessly set billions of farm animals free, and eat only dead half-rotten plants while talking to trees...

Ok, I'm joking, but the amount of disinformation about veganism is abominable and harmful, so some people would never go to a vegan workshop because of all the disinformation they've been fed. So never tell people it's a vegan workshop. Call it **"How to Effortlessly Lose Weight Forever, Become a Morally Superior Person and Fight Climate Change – All at the Same Time"**. No, I'm joking again, but considering creative strategies to draw as many people as possible is important. Don't create a poster saying "Vegan Workshop" above a photo of lettuce leaves. Please. Since veganism is a diet (and a philosophy as well for some) **including delicious vegan food in the workshop is of utmost importance!**

Myths that every vegan workshop should bust: vegan food is not tasty, vegans can only eat salads, eating vegan is insanely expensive, vegans don't get enough protein, cooking vegan is painfully difficult, vegans are annoying. I think it's important to show that eating and cooking vegan is easier than people think, because most people fear they will not be able to afford a vegan lifestyle or that it will be hard to find ingredients or that everything they prepare without dairy, eggs and meat will be tasteless. So it is very important to tackle the **practical issues** connected to vegan lifestyles to encourage people to cook and eat vegan. Very important.

Our vegan experience in Warsaw during the "Resilient communities workshop" (one of the 3 Regional Re-ACTIONS supported by the EYF project) was a vegan cooking workshop, so we prepared and ate vegan food together and it was a wonderful learning experience for everyone who took part and the feedback was very positive. I think it is important for people to see, cook and taste food made without animal products to really convince them. In my opinion it would be great to finish the workshop with a film about vegan lifestyle or farm animal rights (like "Vegucated" or "Food Inc."). Search the Internet for some of these sites with vegan recipes: Vegan Bandit, Minimalist Baker, Vegan Richa, One Green Planet, Oh She Glows, Fatfree Vegan. But there are more!

Plant!

"You cannot protect the environment unless you empower people, you inform them and you help them understand that these resources are their own, that they must protect them."
Professor Wangari Maathai

Setting up community gardens and planting trees

Why plant food or trees?

- **It integrates the community.** Taking care of trees or gardens can become a common task for a group of people and bring them closer together; green areas can also encourage people to spend time outside and together.
- **It is easy to start.** Sometimes getting a permit or proper seedlings might be a challenge, but you can even create a guerilla garden without asking for any permits and use inexpensive seeds of small plants to keep the budget down. But maintaining a community garden or young trees will require a group of devoted people, who can take care of it.
- **Results are fairly quick and visible.** People engaged in planting can see quite soon the impact of their work (but they will need to put more ongoing effort in order to maintain it!).
- **It is inclusive and encourages diversity.** You don't need to know the local language to plant something (although you might need to know some of it, if you're acquiring a permit); anyone can be involved, no matter their previous experience or physical abilities.

What resources will you need?

Depending on the strategy that you take, a plot of soil and a fistfull of random seeds can be enough. However if you want to create something more official and hopefully also more lasting, you will probably need:

- a plot of soil that belongs to the municipality or a friendly person;
- a permit to plant seeds and seedlings there;
- an idea what local people want to grow in that plot (if you want it to last, then involvement and consent of local community is crucial!);
- a plan of what should be planted where and when (here some gardening experience can be very useful too; if you don't have it yourself, just ask around!);
- seeds of plants that you want to grow;
- appropriate gardening equipment (maybe you can borrow it locally) and water source; and
- persistence – if you want the garden or the trees to last, somebody will need to tend them!

Who can be your target audience?

Actually… anyone! It can be:

- a group of youth from underprivileged area, to whom gardening can become a meaningful way to spend their time and acquire skills;
- families struggling with food supply;
- kids from a refugee centre (gardening is said to have therapeutic properties); or… anyone else who would rather grow carrots together than stay alone in front of a computer.

Introduction to permaculture (Gračanica, Gaia Kosovo)

With this project, on World Food day, SCI Kosovo took on the challenge of bringing together people from diverse backgrounds (young people from different cities in Kosovo, as well as students from the agriculture faculty) and giving them, for the first time in Kosovo, an introduction to permaculture. This is a holistic approach to living, showing how our lives can be organized in a way that benefits both people and environment. It often starts from growing your own food in gardens maintained according to permaculture principles.

The main goal of the event was to promote an alternative food production model, with the intention that people could become inspired, think in a holistic way about the links between their consumption and state of the environment and put their knowledge to use by creating their own gardens. However this was just the first step – more events were planned and they should keep bringing together people of various backgrounds to address human relationship issues through common work and simply spending time, playing music and talking together.

Lauriano Food Forest (Lauriano, SCI Italy)

Lauriano is a small town approximately 30 km from Torino. For many years the landscape and territory have not been maintained so now many areas are abandoned. The local administration and citizens, in collaboration with Torino University, prepared a plan for environmental recovery and production, through agroforestry (growing edible plants in forest complexes). Through SCI Italy's project Lauriano community was supported in the implementation of the first experimental path for agroforestry system demonstration and promotion. The initiative was also an opportunity for the association to have more intense interaction with local people, as they became more interested in the project thanks to the presence of international volunteers during the workcamp. In fact many locals joined the works. In the future the project will hopefully become a source of employment opportunities and will be expanded (there are already plans to introduce beekeeping and biointensive gardening). Together people find hope and ideas for the future – they can manage their valuable local resources together.

Batu Loceng Youth Eco Garden (Suntenjaya, Indonesia International Work Camp)

In the middle of a conventional farm in Kampung Batu Loceng (West Java, Indonesia) a group consisting of around 20 people – local farmers, international and local volunteers and children – set up a permaculture garden. They built a greenhouse and raised flower beds, designed their individual gardens, experimented with organic liquid fertilizer and organic pesticides and of course throughout all this, they learned to grow organic fruit and vegetables! The group decided to start making change with food, because everybody needs food everyday. "By making a permaculture garden, we learn about sustainable agriculture to regenerate the ecosystem, community, and economy. We prepare ourselves and the next generation to produce our food in an eco-friendly way. This is really good, because we can show them that sustainable farming is much better for their environment, their health, and their economy. We can all share the healthy and yummy food", says the project organizer.

Trees for a better climate (Delvina, Projekte Vullnetare Nderkombetare Albania)

In late autumn a very diverse group of young people and adult volunteers participated in a workshop at the Cultural Centre of Delvina and later went outside to get their hands dirty. “We built a bridge of communication between two important groups in Delvina: youth – representing energy, new ideas; and local government – holding resources & decision-making power”, says Silva Huda, organizer of the project. Both local students and local authorities (including the mayor of Delvina!) joined the voluntary action of planting 25 trees that will contribute to capturing tons of CO2. “But I would be better in explaining the intrinsic value of planting and protecting trees rather than talking about ecosystem services”, adds Silva. The event got a good media coverage in the local TV and raised a lot of interest amongst passers-by.

Thanks to this activity students got the spark of voluntarism (PVN Albania was not present in the region before) and local municipal representatives got excited about possible future projects related to environment and climate protection.

South Africa Volunteer Work Camp Association Gardening Project (Pretoria, SAVWCA)

"What better way to live sustainably than to grow food in your own garden?", ask volunteers from SAVWCA. Local community members of Pretoria (mainly employed youth) learned to grow their own vegetables as a way to oppose consumerism and empower community members.

One earth, one people (Kpalimé, Association Togolaise des Volontaires)

“Workcamp coordinators play an essential role in informing SCI volunteers about climate justice and the Create a Climate for Peace campaign”, say project organizers. This is why they were invited to a training about climate justice and got the chance to practice one of the possible solutions: growing their own organic food.

COMMUNITY GARDENING

| Agnieszka Zielińska

What is community gardening and how did it start?

Do you think it is possible to live in a huge block of flats in the city center and at the same time have your own "green place" where you can relax, learn about nature and actually grow your own fruit, vegetables and herbs? Sounds like a dream, doesn't it? A lot of citizens of big cities didn't even think about it, because having a place like this in the middle of the city seemed to be impossible. But luckily there were some people who had a crazy idea, decided to try…and, thanks to them, urban gardening movement has started. People took over empty public spaces and turned them into gardening plots. As this phenomenon developed, urban gardening turned out to have many varied functions – apart from fulfilling their "food needs", people can also gather together which makes the community stronger and stronger.

Our experience during the "Resilient communities workshop"

During our "Resilient communities workshop", part of the project supported by EYF, we had an amazing opportunity to visit one of the very first urban gardens in Warsaw. Only five minutes from the city center, exactly between the most representative park of the Polish capital and the Parliament building, there is a stunning place called Jazdów, which is basically the neighbourhood of wooden houses with gardens. A group of people from Warsaw, who felt a need for a green place, started a community garden in an empty lot belonging to the city. They called it "Motyka i Słońce", which means "A hoe and the sun". The place is open for everybody, like a public space – you can just come, meet other urban gardeners and join them in their work. So we did!

During our workshop we were working on an irrigation system, made up of earthenware pots. With the help of urban gardeners everything went very quickly, so after work we could enjoy a delicious pizza made with the vegetables and herbs from the garden and baked in their "hand-made", clay stove.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

| Silva Huda

CSA stands for community supported agriculture and is the European equivalent of the Japanese teikei. The latter means cooperation and was initiated by a group of Japanese women, who were concerned about the quality of their food and started a direct, cooperative relationship with local farmers, whom they supported financially on annual basis. In return the women got regular delivery of crops from a reliable source. CSA farmers stay in permanent contact with other members to consult about type and quantity of fruit and vegetables to be cultivated and how they should be distributed. Consumers share the risks, as they pay beforehand (crops may fail due to drought or insects), but also the benefit, as they gain a trusted source of produce. Our group during the "Resilient Communities Workshop" was able to see an example of CSA system during the visit to the "Dobrzyń nad Wisłą" farm (in a village near Warsaw). But there are many more of such farms, e.g. the Gartenkooperative in Liechtenstein. This project was initiated by a group of people who share the costs of renting the land and hiring a professional gardener, and of course the resulting food. Moreover, all members, no matter their experience in gardening have to work in the garden for 40 hours throughout the year. Having grasped the way the CSA farm in Dobrzyń nad Wisłą works and after volunteering for 4 months in Gartenkooperative (as part of LTV project in partnership with SCI Switzerland), I could not think of a better setting to gain a holistic perspective about sustainability.

Why volunteer in a CSA?

- **Learn about ecology and sustainability** – as part of a CSA farm project you will learn about the importance of the soil, the seeds, climate change, etc. In a nutshell, you will realize how every living organism is interlinked in specific ways.
- **Learn about health and the Slow Food movement** – CSA means good, clean, fair food and good condition of soil, free of pesticides and artificial fertilizers. So you will get to appreciate the seasonal and locally produced vegetables.
- **Learn about gardening** – CSA farms give you the joy of getting your hands dirty, improve your gardening skills, but also realize how serious a job gardening is.
- Last but not least, being part of CSA gives you a great **sense of belonging to a wider community**. In particular when consumers from all walks of life create the farm, I assure you it is going to be a platform for the cross-pollination of other, creative projects in the community. Volunteering in a CSA farm will awaken your senses to the food you eat and your surroundings.

Be visible!

Happenings, street actions and other public events

Why organize a happening or another public event?

- **It allows a lot of activists to get their hands on concrete work.** In the course of preparations you will need to come up with a creative and fun idea, take care of logistics, prepare the banner, put up posters… So if you are wondering how to activate your activists, organizing a public event provides lots of things to do.
- **It raises visibility of your organization and can encourage new people to join you**. Probably what you are doing is pretty great, but people won't know about it unless you tell them. You can do it in a creative and engaging way, e.g. through a street performance and maybe some of the people will get inspired to do things together with you in the future (if that is your goal, remember to collect people's contacts!).
- **You can join global campaigns and become a part of massive, worldwide movement.** It can be very empowering to know that your efforts contribute to a major, international goal. But remember: happenings and demonstrations can increase visibility of your message, but if you want to achieve change in policy or people's daily habits you will need a follow up of more focused events on smaller scale, like workshops, screenings or workcamps.
- **It creates a lot of positive energy and motivation for people who are involved in implementing the activity.** The atmosphere during the event, seeing outsiders interested in what you have to say, reading about your event in the media – it all becomes possible once you decide to take your message out to the street and share it with the world!

And make no mistake – not all happenings, demonstrations or street actions end with success. Some of them will be cancelled because of bad weather, some others will be attended by a very small group of people. However it is important that you learn from your attempts and adjust your ideas in the future!

What resources will you need?

It really depends on the activity, as public events can range from flash mobs which require basically no supplies to massive demonstrations with banners, samba bands and photos taken from a helicopter. However what typically comes in useful:

- permit from municipality or police to organize a public gathering or demonstration (usually needs to be acquired several days in advance!);
- posters, flyers, media articles, events on Facebook informing about the goal, date, time and venue of the event; and
- banners, posters, flyers, t-shirts, or any other type or creative materials for the actual event that will spell out your message very, very clearly (usually it is good to focus on briefly letting people know what the problem is about, what are possible solutions and what they can do about it – a call for action is essential!).

Who can be your target audience?

Usually it will be general public or a specific target group that gathers where you are organizing your activity (e.g. students in a university campus). Often, if you don't expect a crowd at your event, it is worth investing more energy to get media to be present (or to create your own media by taking great photos/videos). Even if they were not there in person, people will learn about your initiative through other channels!

HAPPENING

Release good energy for climate (Warsaw, Polish Youth Climate Network)

A coalition of Polish NGOs and informal groups prepared a joyful happening, that took place on the Global Day of Climate Action (November 29, 2015). The idea was simple, as explained by Adam Markuszewski, one of the organizers: "Our goal was to symbolically release good energy and show politicians that Poles love renewables". In order to do so, people who gathered at dusk in one of the main squares in Warsaw used their phones and flashlights to create a light painting of a sun. The message was sent to people who gathered in Paris for the climate summit COP21 just couple days later. Photos from the event went viral and were presented in all major Polish media, as well as on the main page of organizations like 350.org and Avaaz.org.

Photo: Bogusz Bilewski & Konrad Konstantynowicz (Greenpeace Polska)

The happening was very positive and brought people lots of fun. Even if it lasted just for 15 minutes due to cold weather, the results will live much longer. After the photoshoot everyone was invited to an afterparty with vegan food (prepared by a social co-op set up by a group of refugee women), climate photo booth and a screening of "In Transition 2.0" documentary.

AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES

GAIA Hiking Day for Sustainability (Budapest, Utilapu Hungary)

Hiking Day for Sustainability was a 12 km walk in the nature with 7 stations. Each stop provided a challenge to the visitors and allowed them to check their knowledge about seasonal fruit and vegetables (by putting them in baskets according to the appropriate season of the year), attitudes for the use of energy (by marking activities that help use it in an efficient way), and recognition of plants by their smell and birds from their voices and others. Along the way volunteers were waiting with snacks and drinks. After completing all tasks, hikers (amongst them many children) could also have a hands-on experience with vermicompost, urban beekeeping and learn about the Create a Climate for Peace Campaign. Those who completed the entire programme received something to remember the day by: a memory game about composting (for children) or Fair Trade products (for adults). "Our biggest positive surprise was that not only the children but also the adults took part in the games with pleasure", says Dóra Lajos, one of the organizers. "During the organising work we could make the connection between different working groups in Utilapu stronger, as many members joined preparation work and were present at the spot", she adds.

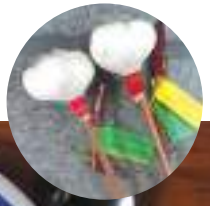
Climate for peace bicycle tour (Mauritius, SVI Mauritius)

A group of 29 cyclists from all around Mauritius came together for a bicycle tour under the name of "Climate for Peace Caravane de l'amitie". The caravan went through many villages around the island. Every day participants received potted plants and their task was to encourage families that they met along the way to plant them in their yards. All families accepted the plants. They were happy to have a plant in their yard and they promised to take care of it. "Our participants made new friends on the road and promised to come back again to see the plant when it grows up", says Dimitry Duval, one of the organizers. "Our organization obtained more visibility and many participants expressed their interest to join us and continue the good work", he adds. Evening activities consisted of quizzes, poems, energizers and workshops about climate change and nature conservation. Participants stayed in tents, sleeping close to nature, and this way tried to live according to the ideas they shared with others.

Sustainable living and climate justice at SCI's International Committee Meeting (Mali Idjos, Volonterski Centar Vojvodine Serbia)

Under the slogan "Occupy ICM" VCV activists aimed to make sustainable living and climate justice an important and practical part of SCI's 2014 International Committee Meeting. On the first day the team decorated the venue with climate justice related quotes and printouts with haiku poetry on climate justice. They also exhibited photos about the 2014 flooding in Serbia (the floods were escalated due to climate change impacts). Every day the team was organizing small guerilla actions, like putting stickers with inspirational quotes about peace and climate justice throughout the venue. Delegates who came to the meeting from around the world simply had to remember that ICM sessions are not just about procedures, but most importantly about achieving social and climate justice through ambitious, voluntary actions. But world peace starts with inner peace, so a meditation corner with pillows, fabrics and banners was waiting for the participants of this busy meeting seeking a quiet space to relax and think.

"We believe our main contribution is that we actually put some standards on future planning and organizing of SCI events, because we showed that this is possible", says Lea Cikoš, one of the action organizers.



Climate March (Kharkiv, SVIT Ukraine)

A poster design workshop, study visits to Chernobyl Historical Center and Vostok alternative energy showroom park, a well attended press conference and a screening of "Chasing Ice" documentary were just an interlude to the Climate March in Kharkiv, which took place in on the Global Day of Climate Action (November 29, 2015). The event got a very good media coverage and raised a lot of interest, despite rainy weather.

Nuk Dua Qese – I don't want a plastic bag (Tirana, PVN Albania)

Activists of PVN Albania focused on educating the people of Tirana about the harmful environmental impacts of using plastic bags excessively. The aim of the campaign was to encourage the public to think twice about their needless consumption of plastic bags and to introduce the facts about plastic's life-cycle. The campaign included educational posters and leaflets, which were distributed throughout the city, an engaging street action and a creative street art project.

TRANSITION MOVEMENT

| Emilia Makówka, Adam Markuszewski

The 21st century is filled with many disillusioning, scary, discouraging events and stories. In effect, the local communities can become more aware of their need to act together to create a decent livelihood in sustainable ways to make them resilient in times of economic and environmental crisis. The Transition Movement is aiming to show practical ways to attain better resilience – tools and means of organising, which sustainably solve issues such as dependence on fossil fuels and the global food market, inefficient water systems, housing crisis, marginalisation and the financial crisis.

How do you organize a Transition-based workcamp? Some of these ideas were tried out during the "Resilient communities workshop" in Warsaw.

PEOPLE

- Get to know places, people in your neighbourhood, its history – and share it!
- Organize meetings with inhabitants to develop a way of listening and understanding each other.
- Organize practical workshops open to the locals.
- Make use of your local experts.

FOOD

- Prepare food by yourself or go to local, vegan restaurants.
- Support local family business, markets and food co-ops, community gardens, beekeepers.
- If possible, support a community garden or CSA farm with your work and gain a share in the yields.
- Make a vegan cooking workshop part of your programme.

LOGISTICS

- Use a friend's house instead of a hostel for accommodation or encourage local participants to host those coming from farther away.
- Use public transport including public bike system.
- Make it a rule for the participants to come by land.
- Look for a venue where there is a PV panel or a wind installation to have a sustainable energy source.
- Invite local experts to give talks at the event and use Skype for those who live farther away.

What are the benefits of organising your workcamp this way?

- Strengthening the links between your organisation and the people around it.
- Making you more visible and approachable for people willing to act.
- Reducing the carbon footprint of your group and teaching practical methods for daily life.
- Empowering the local initiatives and people (like farmers, entrepreneurs, youth).

SOCIAL STREETS

| Alisa Timofeeva

Have you ever wondered who are the people that live next to you? Where do they work and what are they interested in? Haven't you ever wanted to have friends living next door that you can share your Sunday morning cup of coffee with, without crossing half of the city and negotiating a meeting point and time 2 weeks in advance?

The founder of socialstreet.it Federico Bastiani decided to bring this spirit back by turning his home street in Bologna into a so-called "social street" whose goals are to promote socialization between neighbors living in the same street to build relationships, to interchange needs, to share expertise and knowledge, to implement common interest projects. To reach these goals Federico recommends following these steps:

Step 1: Create a Closed Group on Facebook

Social Street recommends a closed group to protect the privacy of your members and potentially encourage higher sign-up rates. But remember: people before pixels! The use of an online network should encourage offline interaction, not just at the digital level.

To be found among the other Facebook groups that are a part of Social Street, be sure to use the proper naming convention for your group: "Residents of [street name or square, neighborhood, etc.] – city – Social Street." (e.g. "Residents of Queen Street West – Toronto – Social Street").

Step 2: Advertise the Group

Print out copies of a poster that includes the details of your Facebook group, encouraging people to join. Post copies in a variety of highly visible settings like parks, apartment buildings, restaurants, schools, and laundromats.

Step 3: Manage the Group

There shouldn't be just one person in charge. Everyone should have the chance to participate and engage in the online group's activities, but there should be a smaller group that helps keep the conversation going and ensure comments are taken into consideration.

Step 4: Go Out Into the Street

Once you have engaged a small group of interested neighbours, you are ready for your Social Street event. Guide people based on their interests to plan and organize a public event involving all group members as a first "get to know each other". Make the event open for other people to join in as well. Keep the conversations going and use the group as a forum to plan the next meetings and activities.

Step 5: Measure Your Success

Work!

"The position of the pacifist is unbearable if he does not undertake intense, practical action on his own... We need the firm rock of well-directed action if we are to resist the terrible drift dragging us towards reactions of fear, hatred, and violence."
Pierre Ceresole

Why organize a workcamp?

- **It is the type of activity that is bringing about change in communities for decades now.** The first SCI workcamp took place in 1920 and since then communities around the world benefit from voluntary work and volunteers learn by doing – to change the world. But remember, you can't address all challenges with workcamps, they are most appropriate when a community needs specific support in terms of physical labour or presence of other people.
- **You can create a tangible difference for and with local communities.** There is a category of things that everybody knows need to be done, but they won't until a special time comes – a workcamp can be this special time when things get fixed, changed and improved. Of course they are also a way to address emergency situations, when help is most needed.
- **It is an opportunity to experience a just and sustainable lifestyle.** For several days, or even over two weeks, a diverse group of people is living together. They set-up group rules, decide on the menu and free time activities. All this can be an opportunity to experience a different lifestyle according to rules of sustainability, consensus decision making and intercultural learning. Something that people might be too busy or not brave enough to try out in their everyday lives.
- **Just because you can.** Even if you are a very small group with limited resources, you can organize a workcamp. People all over the world are doing it tirelessly year after year, making change often in unexpected ways. And as part of SCI, you can count on support coming from the network structures. So get down to work!

What resources will you need?

There are as many lists as there are projects in SCI's online placement system. However the workcamp checklist will usually cover:

- clear idea of what you want to achieve with your project: it should be based on input coming from the local community and will determine everything else;
- programme of daily activities, that includes a work part, a study part and free time;
- accommodation and beds or mattresses;
- food and somewhere to prepare it;
- working materials that can be anything from office materials to bricks and cement; and
- journalists, local entrepreneurs, your friends… and dozens of other people, who can help you implement the project.

Who can be your target audience?

- International and local volunteers (both as participants and organizers) – their presence simply makes workcamps what they are.
- Local community members, who define what are their needs regarding the work part, should also join the project, or at least be aware of it.
- Local authorities, can be an immense help in getting things done once they realize the potential of your work.

WORKCAMPS

Landfill building in Mangkang (Mangkang, Indonesian International Work Camp)

Mangkang, Indonesia is a fisher and farmer village, which is a frequent site of activities done by IIWC. The main activity of this particular international workcamp focused on building a sign board for a waste disposal site that the volunteers also built during the camp. It was done as *gotong royong*, or community service, by the volunteers along with the locals. Together they cleaned public areas to show that everybody can take care for their local surrounding. Volunteers also organized an info action for local mothers, explaining basic rules of waste management and encouraging them to join the "Less Plastic Day On Monday" programme. In the promotional action participants were exchanging homemade orange water for plastic bags.

The volunteer group, assisted by local farmers and university students, also planted 2000 mangrove seeds to prevent coastal erosion. Over 1 km of coastline in the area is in danger due to erosion, heavy river flows and cutting mangroves by local people. The trees not only provide a natural defense to sea abrasion, but also allow more biodiversity in the area. The local community is protected from the sea, but also benefits economically, thanks to the fish that comes back to the Mangkang area to live in the mangroves. For many people involved, planting mangroves was a completely new experience. "I feel that this camp was so good and fun!", said Nouval, participant from Surabaya, Indonesia. It was a really busy 5 days!

There are other ways (Sveti Filip i Jakov, Volunteers' Centre Zagreb)

"There are other ways" was a project inside a workcamp. Participants of the "Deeds and Needs" camp, whose goal was to support local volunteers in manual work around the Rehabilitation Centre in Sveti Filip i Jakov, joined field trips and workshops about traditional, ecological production in the region. They were accompanied by a group of residents of the centre.

"We have organized a workshop after our first excursion to saltworks, and demonstrated to the residents in Rehabilitation Centre in Sveti Filip i Jakov what we have learnt and seen there by preparing a natural toothpaste", says Blazena Stranska, the workcamp coordinator. Later the group visited a Rehabilitation Centre in Zemunik Donji, where the residents themselves introduced the participants to their lavender production and conducted a lavender workshop.

The topic of this workcamp was volunteering with people with disabilities. Thanks to this initiative, the study part was widened to the ecological level and enriched by learning about other ways of social care.

Peace through environmental protection (Uda Inguruwatte, SCI Sri Lanka)

Volunteers of SCI Sri Lanka started preparations for this project with a visit to the local municipality. They told local authorities about their plan to prevent soil erosion and promote organic farming. Municipality representatives liked the idea and ensured organizers of their support.

As a next step a representative of the local government joined the team of volunteers in their visit to the project site. The delegation met with the priest of the local buddhist temple, the headteacher and other village activists to discuss next steps and take into account their views and recommendations. Finally seedlings were provided by the Department of Forestry, which also advised the project team on planting and plant maintenance.

During the 4 workcamps that followed these detailed preparations, participants planted 2500 plants! They also organized workshops and meetings for the local youth about tackling environmental issues and living together in a diverse society. A group consisting of 20 school-leavers from the village, religious leaders, school teachers and community leaders was formally appointed to monitor the growth of the plants, and protect them from any damage.

Head on! Knowledge for a sustainable future (Ponoviče, Zavod Voluntariat Slovenia)

The main topic of the "Head on! Knowledge for a sustainable future" workcamp were bees. International and local volunteers learned everything about their role from cultural and ecological perspective, their habitats and basic rules of beekeeping. They made bee products, built bug hotels and planted bee-friendly flora. Participants of the workcamp lived sustainably and in an environmentally responsible way.

KEEP THE COAL IN THE SOIL

Experiencing life with two coal power plants in the background (Plemetina, Gaia Kosovo)

| Ivana Kostadinović

Plemetina is a village some 14 km away from Prishtina, the capital city of Kosovo. It is a diverse place, inhabited largely by Roma, but also Serbs, Albanians and other ethnic and national groups. A two-week workshop on climate and environmental justice took place there in April 2015, thanks also to the support of the European Youth Foundation. During the event, participants had the chance to experience the life of average citizens of Plemetina, as they were staying with host families for four days. Their goal was to explore local issues and come up with possible alternatives. They learned about the neighbourhood, local culture and… great challenges that the community is facing.

In Plemetina inhabitants are impacted by "Kosovo A" and "Kosovo B" – the two nearby coal power plants, which emit tons of dust and smoke every day. Together with unprocessed liquids, these pollutants have been carelessly released into the surrounding for decades, devastating air, soil and water. The level of pollution emitted by the two plants is 74 times higher than allowed by European standards. This is why it's not a coincidence that Obiliq/Obilić municipality, to which Plemetina belongs, has the highest rate of cancer in Kosovo, as well as a high incidence of chronic respiratory diseases. People live in the shadow of a huge pile of ash that is growing as waste from the power plants is continuously disposed there. Other issues include expensive communal waste disposal (so trash piles up next to houses and playgrounds) and ecological devastation of the local Sitinca River (which used to be rich in fish and other flora and fauna). On top of it all, local people experience frequent electricity cuts, so they can't even enjoy this benefit of living next to not one, but two dirty power plants! In fact there are plans to build "Kosovo C" plant (right next to the other two), which could help close "Kosovo A", but also lock local communities into more decades of pollution and dirty energy.

Participants got to work on those issues with local children, who gather at the Learning Centre coordinated by a local organization, Balkan Sunflowers Kosova. They drew together and talked about the world they would like to live in. Later they climbed the Ash Mountain, as they decided to call it, and discussed health and social impacts of the situation with local youth. Together with local scouts and members of Romaroad, another local organization, they also collected an immense amount of garbage in the village centre and next to the elementary school.

They brought the issue back to people's attention, however waste disposal remains a big problem, as communal service is simply unaffordable to the many families living under poverty line. But the main highlight was planting 200 fruit trees and setting up a permacultural spiral together with local families. Despite the pollution, people in the village also strive for food sovereignty.

Many issues still need to be tackled in Plemetina, with their root causes (like environmental and social injustice) in mind. People want to live healthy, safe lives and this is the point of justice for which we, as activists, should constantly strive!

URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

Transition Wedding and Princess Garden (Berlin, SCI Germany)

| Alisa Sidorenko

The two initiatives – both the Transition Town Tour and the tour and workshop in Prinzessinnengarten – were part of the 10-day Regional Re-ACTION workshop "Refresh the Climate and Rewrite the Future", realized within the EYF project. Both initiatives raised awareness on the topic of urban sustainability and possible ways of sustainable living where every available space in big cities is used to let new green spaces bloom. Increasing awareness of critical consumption, healthy food, less CO2 and better microclimate, participants could get inspired by the core activists who established this urban experience.

The urban gardening project Prinzessinnengarten

A former dump in the city had been turned into a mobile garden in 2009 by two inspired people with the help of many volunteers. They started by making beds and growing vegetables but then continued to internal projects – they gradually built a local organic cafe, bee colony, funny worms composts, soundwall, bike repair place, social place for work and meetings, little shop for gardening, free shop, irrigation system, bar for visitors, and much more – and all is surrounded by the garden. Despite being located in the center of city life, the garden blossoms during the growing season. It uses only organic materials and people from the whole area come either for communal work or just to have some coffee with their friends. A lot of young interns and volunteers work here, supporting the garden, making the place beautiful. The organic café uses products from local farmers and also offers courses and workshops to support the garden, pay the rent and provide materials. I am very inspired when I see how people even in the city space transform the space around, changing their and others' life. Urban gardening is not only about growing food of course. First of all it is about social space, meeting each other, finding your community. It is about trust, people's relations and their inner conditions. And we have many more resources in the countryside for such creation! This is just one small example, a little piece of transitional processes happening all around, like seeds of the future planted all over.

Weddingwandler as a Transition Town Initiative in Berlin

The Weddingwandler are a group of people, who feel involved in the district Wedding and want to campaign for an active and eco-friendly neighbourhood. They have many different projects from cooking together, sharing equipment and green electricity to community supported agriculture. Our host put it in a funny but clear way: "We have had the oil age when we relied on the machines work, and it is not bad, it was the time for us to have more time, to do research and learn… now the oil party is over and we need to move to the knowledge-based lifestyle". What inspires us is how illuminated, creative and right the local initiatives are and how they spread around. People can do amazing things with their hands and hearts! Local initiatives can be seen small if we compare them with the global scale, but they create such huge invisible net of awakened people bringing the change. This net penetrates the air – you do not see it but you feel how larger and larger part of the population becomes conscious, how projects inspire each other and how even in the most challenging conditions people do bring change. Local projects bring so much meaning into our lives, into our desire for the change of the current production-destruction-consumption circle. Local projects fulfill your inner aspirations, but being tied together in the global net they become the worldwide action. People are realizing it and reproducing examples of more resilient living. So take your local action!

GAIA MICROGRANTS PROGRAMME

for climate justice and sustainable living

helping SCI activists and branches put their ideas into action

GAIA MicroGrants provide funding of up to €500 to enable SCI volunteers to carry out initiatives that contribute to climate justice and sustainable living.

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- You are planning a workshop to train volunteers to act as eco-messengers and raise awareness of climate justice and sustainability…
- You want to improve sustainability of your workcamp with innovative ways like involving local authorities in action towards climate justice...

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The GAIA MicroGrants are based on 4 Principles:

- **Action oriented:** supporting initiatives that combine awareness raising with practical actions.
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- **Priority to projects in the Global South.**
- **Light procedures:** bureaucracy is limited to the necessary minimum, for the sake of supporting the planning and evaluation of the initiatives.

Learn more from the SCI web page (www.sci.ngo) and by subscribing to the weekly newsletter of the Create a Climate for Peace Campaign (http://bit.ly/SubscribeFridayUpdates)

GAIA MICROGRANTS PROGRAMME

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