SCI Strategic Plan
2015-2018

SCI
SERVICE CIVIL INTERNATIONAL
PAX

Content

Introduction

Dear Branches and volunteers of SCI,

SCI is a live organism which evolves and moves through history carried on by volunteers. As any living creature it has a heartbeat to pump energies, senses to perceive the realities around and a breath that defines the pace. The Strategic Plan is our breath where the fresh air we take in while drafting this plan gives oxygen to realize it over the next few years.

Every strategic plan proved to be different. Oftentimes, you start with something in your mind, but the result is very different and not similar to anything previously written, because the simple act of imagining the plan projects your mind to new scenarios and provides it with new keys for interpretation. The evolution of several strategic plans reflects the evolution of SCI.

As any other, this document also had its story and it is a fruit of these times. You won't find in it precise actions, criteria to satisfy, or quantitative indicators.

It is not a prescription, it is not a to-do list, and it does not tell you what to do tomorrow or after tomorrow. You will find instead a vision for the future, a robust set of values that can help a large organization like SCI to navigate through the coming years - a tool for the future that should help the branches and volunteers of SCI to recognize where they are from and where they are going. This Strategic Plan does not have a selective approach that would limit our potential and would put in question the development of existing projects and initiatives. It is rather an extensive and inclusive plan where the focus is on building new synergies and on making new connections, as well as on inspiring and empowering SCI's activists and volunteers in their deeds and words.

The structure of the Strategic Plan shows where we stand now and which goals we work for, it gives examples of how we do this and it points out which future we are building.

Concretely, the Plan starts with a context analysis that describes **the world we live in and with a reminder of our Mission, Vision and Values.** Then it presents a set of Goals and Objectives.

The ideological pillars of SCI are represented through **two goals: Education and Volunteering,** where the activities we organize with and for our volunteers help society to move in the direction of peace and social justice; and **Awareness Raising and Solidarity** where SCI enhances global solidarity between people and makes the connection between small realities and the global picture to which they belong.

Each goal has different **Objectives** detailing our approach to the goals. For each of these Objectives, the Strategic Plan provides **Tools and Methods.** These examples help to put the objectives into practice. Some of the Tools and Methods are relevant for branches, others for the International Coordination, others for both; however they all can be the ground for an improved cooperation between branches and groups of SCI.

Over the next 4 years, the Strategic Plan invites international bodies and branches to look at the Tools and Methods and get inspired by them in order to implement the Strategic Plan.

The **Enabling Actions** are another crucial part of the Strategic Plan. They describe the areas where we need to develop actions for increasing our organizational capacity in order to achieve the Goals and Objectives. The Strategic Plan closes with **A glimpse into the future** which dreams about the future world we would like to see and towards which we are working guided by this Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan Team

The world we live in

The world we live in is ever changing. Historical events, natural disasters, cultural shifts, scientific and technological discoveries and political decisions are the visible milestones of the changes, but behind many developments are the actions of ordinary people.

History has shown that people, individuals and grassroots organisations, have an impact on the world they live in in countless ways: sometimes unexpectedly, sometimes through a very slow series of steps, and sometimes with a single outbreak.

SCI is an outstanding example of the importance of committed people. A small seed planted in 1920 has now grown into a worldwide network of active people and grassroots organisations striving to contribute to a more peaceful world for all.

Since 1920, the way nations interact with each other, the way we care about our planet, the way we produce goods, the way richer countries trade with poorer countries, and the way we perceive weapons have changed. There have been improvements reached by the worldwide community of active citizens in which SCI plays its part: political organisations like the United Nations and the European Union have been created with the official intention to control nations and prevent wars; efforts are being made to make trade fairer; people are more aware of their impact on the environment; and measures like recycling, organic production of food, conscious local and seasonal consumption are more and more widespread.

Looking back at the history of our movement, we are convinced that our efforts are worthwhile and contributing to positive changes in the world. However, the journey is not over. The world we live in needs our commitment as much as ever.

Striding away from social justice and equality

In spite of the financial crisis of 2008, when the wealth produced by the real work of people had to be used to cover the losses of stock-market gambling, the economic system didn't fundamentally change. It is still based on the same mechanisms, and social and economic improvements are not taken into consideration by the free market system. This system leads to further polarization between the rich and the poor, forced migration, new forms of slavery, and to a situation where it is nearly impossible to live and act without taking part in a system that exploits and abuses workers and nature.
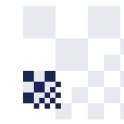
Ongoing violent conflicts and wars

Two world wars, countless regional conflicts and an endless series of civil wars have apparently taught us nothing. Military interventions are still perceived as viable solutions in international and national conflicts. Peace is still considered the end of a conflict, instead of the path that prevents one. Economic, political, and religious conflicts exist all over the globe and often result in an outburst of violence because they are denied or suppressed over years.

As we are writing, the situation is worsening worldwide: after 20 years of peace people are again fighting in Europe and our clocks seem to have been set back to the times of the cold war when surrogate wars, with real people killed, were fought to settle balance between superpowers.

...The world we live in \\\

There are no signs of a sustainable peace process in the Middle East. Instead of this, new military forces are arising to challenge already violent enough regimes and to step in ongoing conflicts like in Syria or Iraq. The situation in Palestine is only perceived as a security and military problem, and it is getting worse as little effort is being made to build the conditions for peace.

Challenges for planet Earth

The planet as a whole isn't doing too well either. The equilibrium between atmosphere, natural resources and Earth inhabitants that made our planet fertile over tens of thousands of years is now at stake because of the impact of human activities, and the production chain of food and goods in particular.

Today, we have already entered the era of a changed climate and the new equilibrium is violently imposing itself; with unprecedented storms and rains, more frequent hurricanes, and higher atmospheric temperature ranges over seasons.

As a result of the overexploitation of natural resources and climate change, resources are getting scarcer and new conflicts are arising.

From local actions to international awareness and a global community

SCI is active on a local level in collaboration with local communities. In these communities, people undertake small and medium scale projects to improve their living conditions: may it be for better education by building a local library or a better park for kids; against discrimination by supporting the integration of migrants; to taking care of the local natural and cultural heritage; to giving relief from recent and past natural disasters; and to finding ways to protect the environment by enhancing biodiversity, promoting recycling and so on. Many of the local community projects also want to raise awareness about a local or global challenge; some of them take political actions and steps to resolve a problem. We support the local communities with the contribution of volunteer work, by helping to design projects, and by linking the local to the global community through international exchange.

When we are confronted with the above mentioned challenges and threats for peace and even for the mere existence of human kind, we tend to feel too small to make a change. SCI wants to show that it is possible for everyone to make a change. The work our volunteers do together with local communities; the exchange between people from different backgrounds , the experience of alternative ways of living and producing food; as well as efforts to raise awareness about the global challenges and the local projects are our way of swimming against the stream of exploitation, warfare, consumerism and the destruction of our planet.

This Strategic Plan is about how SCI as a global movement for peace can best use its knowledge, experience and resources to contribute to a world which is a more peaceful place to live in.

Switzerland, 1927 — Pierre Ceresole

Our Mission

Our Vision

Our Values

Service Civil International is **promoting a culture of peace** by organizing international volunteering projects, with individual, **local** and **global impact**.

Our vision is a world of **peace, social justice** and **sustainable development**, where all people live together with mutual respect and **without** recourse to any form of **violence** to solve conflict.

All SCI activities should be in line with SCI's values. SCI's core values are as follows:

- **Volunteering**, in the sense of acting out of self-initiative, without seeking material reward and for the benefit of civil society, as a method and a statement for social change, whilst never competing with paid labour nor seeking to contribute to strike-breaking

- **Diversity**, one of the main values of SCI, this is a place where everyone is accepted and differences are a valued asset

- **Non-Violence**, as a principle and a method

- **Respect of Human Rights**, respect for individuals as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- **Solidarity**, international solidarity for a more just world and solidarity between human beings on all levels

- **Respect for the sustainability of the ecosystem** of which we are a part and on which we are dependent

- **Inclusion**, to be open and inclusive to all individuals who share the aims and objectives of the movement, without regard to gender, colour, religion, nationality, social status or political views and any other possible grounds for discrimination

- **Empowerment**, empowering people to understand and act to transform the social, cultural and economic structures that affect their lives at all levels

- **Cooperation**, with local communities as well as other local, national and international actors to strengthen the positive potential within civil society as a whole
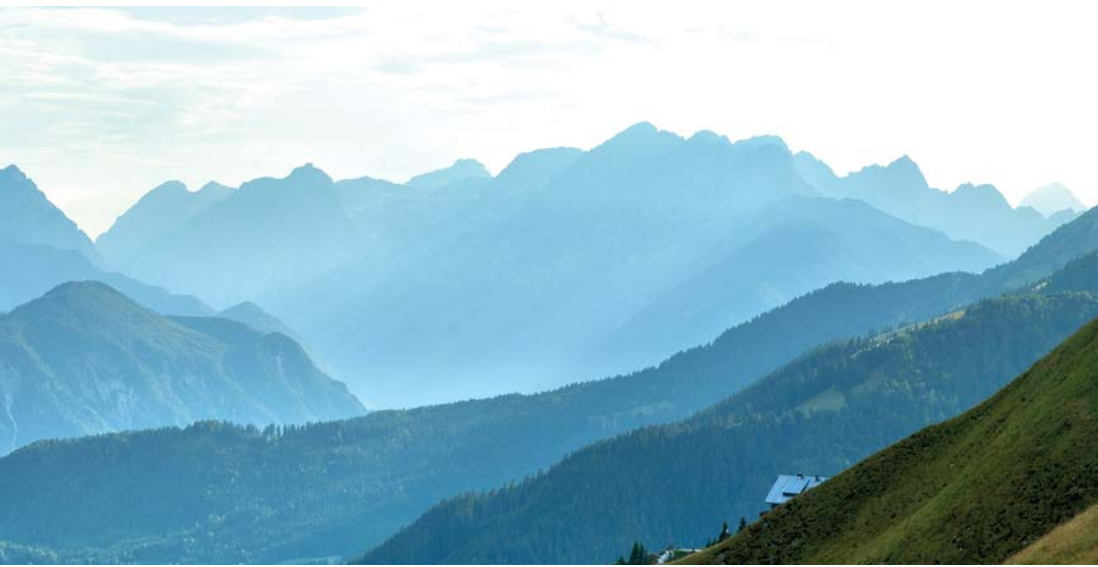
Ukraine, 2012 📷 Anne Medley

Nigeria, 2014 📷 Celia Diaz Box

OUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Strategic Goal 1

EDUCATION & VOLUNTEERING

Inspire and activate people to have an impact in the world and empower them to foster a culture of peace and social justice

Objective 1.1

To promote a culture of peace and pacifism

Objective 1.2

To make volunteering a way of active citizenship and a lifestyle

Objective 1.3

To promote intercultural dialogue and non-violent communication

Objective 1.4

To make the world more socially, ecologically and economically sustainable

Strategic Goal 2

AWARENESS RAISING & SOLIDARITY

Increase the sense of belonging to a global community

Objective 2.1

To promote a global approach to local and worldwide challenges

Objective 2.2

To stimulate solidarity and to value diversity

Enabling Actions

The Enabling Actions are like the pillars of the building. They address our aims for organizational development.

- Co-operation
- Sharing
- Advocacy
- Financial strength and transparency
- Capacity building
- Communication

Zuzana Boudová

Strategic Goal 1

Inspire and activate people to have an impact in the world and empower them to foster a culture of peace and social justice

Objective 1.1

To promote a culture of peace and pacifism

SCI is proud of its pacifist history and achievements.
The pacifist idea continues to inspire our activities. Looking back to the past we see that it helped in finding unity for a worldwide movement, but it is also what runs like a common thread through all the actions that we put in place.

We share a long history of promoting a culture of peace and pacifism. The evolution and changes in our actions reflect how the concept of peace has evolved and diversified in time and in space. Our history is many times a source of inspiration for our future. SCI was the pioneer of international volunteering at the service of peace and we cherish this past as a source of inspiration and vision for our future.

Tools and methods

- Use, promote and share the contents of the international archives of SCI
- Organize study-parts explicitly about SCI in voluntary service projects
- Prepare outgoing volunteers with a sense what SCI stood/stands for
- Raise awareness on local level on ongoing violent conflicts in the world (eg. actions, rallies, debates, workshops)
- Link the work of different branches who are working in or sending volunteers to (post) conflict areas with each other
- Continue and promote No-More-War camps
- Continue cooperating with other peace and pacifist organizations, both worldwide as well on local level
- Pay attention to WW1 (by way of remembrance-project or by other ways) and the background of the founding of SCI
- Whenever needed or desirable, compose or spread statements, which emphasize the path of non-violence
- Raise the voice of conscious objectors in the world and give them a SCI alternative
- Reduce or oppose gender-violence, racism, hate speech, xenophobia, and arms trade with projects focused on these topics
- Use the SCI Policy on Peace Education from ICM 2005
- Archives and conscientious objectors: create projects and study parts together, raise awareness what is the situation in our countries
- Organize and support projects such as Memoric
- Spread and use No more War material and update Peace Messengers toolkit
- Communicate a different viewpoint on current conflicts, from the one spread in media
- Create common platform to share knowledge on ongoing conflicts

Objective 1.2

To make volunteering a way of active citizenship and a lifestyle

Individuals should play an active role in society or in other words be active citizens, because their contribution is needed to achieve social justice and a culture of peace. We want to empower our volunteers to walk in the shoes of others and change perspectives. Our voluntary projects contribute to this by inspiring participants and providing life changing experiences in order for them to adapt the values of active citizenship and volunteerism in everyday life. In our voluntary projects, the volunteers witness that another world is possible. To reach this goal, we wish to maximize the impact of our projects by focusing on both the quality and the quantity of the workcamps and long-term voluntary projects.

However, we would like to go beyond being only an inspiration during workcamps and long-term projects. We strive for a culture of peace and social justice in the whole society. The values of SCI are not only valid during workcamps, but even more so in daily life. Therefore we would like to show that another way of life is possible, and fun!

Lastly, we want to ensure that all our voluntary projects are more accessible for people of all generations, of all levels of education, for families, and for people with disabilities and other special needs: We will be actively taking measures to remove obstacles for groups of people who are currently underrepresented in our voluntary projects.

Tools and methods

- Enforce, promote and improve SCI Workcamp Standards
- Regularly evaluate, monitor and improve co-operation with partner organizations
- Engage activists in SCI organizations at national and international level
- Take measures to retain volunteers (so we would have more experienced volunteers in workcamps)
- Provide activists with opportunities to develop ideas at national and international level
- Improve information for volunteers before the workcamp
- Promote workcamps to a larger audience of potential volunteers
- Focus on providing more opportunities for families in workcamps: ask what they need and what the project needs to facilitate the process
- Monitor and develop mixed age workcamps
- Improve placement procedures and workcamps communication for volunteers with special needs
- Involve local communities in workcamps
- Find and co-operate with new partners and groups based on SCI standards
- Play an active role in CCIVS and promote our idea of volunteering
- Follow the "White Paper on IVS" by CCIVS to stream the expansion of IVS movement together with other networks
- Permanent projects on local level to maintain local volunteers
- Organize workcamps designed for volunteers with more experience and less time available
- Integrate trained volunteers returning from seminar to organize workcamps
- Adopt a common evaluation and monitoring system for our cooperation with partners, accepted by all branches. Set up specific criteria and follow them!
- Improve the training of workcamps coordination (tools for study parts)
- Strengthen LTVs

Objective 1.3

To promote intercultural dialogue and non-violent communication

Intercultural dialogue and non-violent communication are necessary ingredients to walk towards a culture of peace. Intercultural dialogue is needed to reduce prejudice and foster mutual understanding between people with different cultural backgrounds, in order for them to live together peacefully.

In all our activities, we are striving to find non-violent solutions to conflicts. Non-violent communication techniques are spread amongst our volunteers, in order to make a step further towards a culture of peace. So as to foster these values, we are using and spreading methods of non-formal education. We want to extend and improve our activities (seminars, trainings and workshops) to enhance the capacity and skills of our volunteers in these fields.

Furthermore, we continue with creating opportunities for intercultural dialogue and non-violent communication in voluntary projects. International voluntary projects, be it workcamps or long term projects, are a unique tool for bringing together people with different cultural backgrounds. By offering this opportunity to as many people as possible and by taking measures to ensure that the contact between the people leads to more mutual understanding, SCI makes a significant contribution to intercultural dialogue.

Tools and methods

- Using non-formal educational methods at all of our voluntary projects
- Organise trainings and seminars of non-formal education (NFE)
- Spread the concept of NFE throughout our network
- Advocate for the acceptance and appreciation of NFE as a tool in educational projects
- Provide opportunities and support for volunteers to initiate and engage in intercultural dialogue, getting to know other cultures deeper so becoming more open towards differences
- Improve the international communication about seminar and training opportunities for volunteers and activists
- Spreading the approach of non-violent communication, organising activities (discussions, games, projects) in order to emphasize its importance in resolving conflicts peacefully
- Give visibility to the existing SCI-Toolkits on intercultural competencies, non-violent communication and conflict resolution
- Maintain and promote the Pool of Trainers
- Establish a "curriculum" and train-the-trainer seminars for interested volunteers
- Offer good quality (on-line) trainings
- Train campleaders to be able to handle conflicts during workcamps in a way which shows example for non-violent conflict resolution
- Prepare more "ready to use" workshops related to SCI topics and adapted to the workcamp situation, or make existing ones accessible
- Train volunteers to work in (post-)conflict areas
- Improve intercultural dialogue and communication between volunteers in workcamps
- Support Peace/Eco-messengers as practical Non-Formal Education
- Organize training in intercultural communication
- Organize specific intercultural training at beginning of workcamp in refugee camp
- Training course on NVC and conflict transformation in the Mediterranea region

Objective 1.4

To make the world more socially, ecologically and economically sustainable

Sustainability is fundamental to building a culture of peace and social justice. The lack of sustainability inevitably leads to higher social and economic differences, to unbearable changes in lifestyles due to modified climate conditions and worse life conditions. In the 21st century, thus, social, ecological and economic sustainability are necessary conditions for a culture of peace and social justice.

In order to reach this objective, we plan to educate towards and promote a sustainable economic model and lifestyle. Only if we reach a change in the attitudes and lifestyles of citizens, the changes which are needed at political and institutional level become possible. Furthermore, we are striving to reduce our organizational footprint and increase our handprint, making SCI a more sustainable organization.

Tools and methods

- Organize trainings/seminars about Climate Justice (adaptation, mitigation) and sustainability, climate actions (direct actions) and advocacy
- Organize trainings aimed at building capacity and empowering SCI activists and volunteers to become multipliers
- Organize long-term voluntary projects in places, where climate change is generating subtle conflicts
- Network with other organizations, institutions, alternative groups, informal groups, and platforms, to highlight the importance of sustainability to achieve peace, as well as to expand SCI knowledge on environmental sustainability and on alternative economies
- Create a team working on the scientific aspects of climate change and social impact of the current economic system
- Strengthen capacity and increase knowledge of GAIA WG and campaign teams
- Reduce the footprints and increase the economic efficiency of our offices
- Measure and increase the handprints of SCI
- Organize specific study parts on the sustainability of projects
- Establish a rapid response and emergency team for natural disasters
- Support the participation of volunteers in relief workcamps
- Build capacity for advocacy at local, national and international level and follow the creation and implementation of policies related to climate, environment and sustainability
- Raise awareness about topics of sustainability, e.g. waste management
- Study parts in workcamps about sustainability
- Organize small local projects (with the use of GAIA WG Microfund)
- Develop and support the GAIA WG Microgrant
- Organize a program about retaining volunteers with focus on sustainability
- Organize follow up initiative after voluntary projects

Strategic Goal 2

Objective 2.1

To promote a global approach to local and worldwide challenges

Building a global community is done by recognising local experiences as unique expressions of global issues. We contribute to building this awareness at a local level and with the volunteers who join our local projects. We offer the opportunity to exchange experiences of local lifestyles, resistance, and struggle in an interconnected world.

Our voluntary projects are an exchange of human experiences where volunteers and local communities get new perspectives which help them to make the connection between their local struggles and global issues. Through this experience people will recognize themselves as a part of a global mosaic. They will get inspired and learn that they are not alone. Especially in North-South exchanges and through the South-North incoming program, volunteers have the opportunity to get a more differentiated view on the relations between countries from the Global South and the Global North as well as to confront stereotypes and post-colonial racism.

In order to reach this objective, special care will be given to create a space during the voluntary projects in which volunteers and local communities are encouraged to exchange experiences. This will enhance the learning experience in our voluntary projects, and our volunteers will recognize why it is important to support a specific local project from a global perspective.

Tools and methods

- Gain insights into the lives of others in places that are not accessible by all and spread them throughout and beyond the network of SCI
- Add meaningful study parts to workcamps
- Create dedicated space for interaction with the local communities during voluntary projects
- Organise projects focusing on the reconstruction of the sense of community
- Support the theory and new practical ways of sharing by introducing them in our projects
- Prepare outgoing volunteers about topics of workcamps
- Encourage the volunteers who return from a voluntary project to act as multipliers of connections between global and local
- Establish connections between workcamps organized on the same topic
- Organize meaningful North-South, South-North and South-South exchange
- Select volunteers with specific interests for projects
- Connect outcomes of similar workcamps to make them more visible and share knowledge
- Introduce also the local context (culture, uses, traditions) as additional tool.
- Involve professionals to address issues of poverty, discrimination.
- Contact with like-minded organisations
- Global education through story telling

Objective 2.2

To stimulate solidarity and to value diversity

Solidarity and diversity as two entangled concepts are crucial to build a sense of belonging to a global community. Solidarity is a key element that is naturally inherent to any community, whereas diversity is the great tool that provides the community with different points of view needed to properly tackle issues and challenges.

In every community there are people, who are neglected, or excluded for many reasons. Anyone who deviates from the communities norms can be the subject of marginalization. The latter is often connected to the person's social or economic class, employment or educational status, age or belonging to a minority group. Suffering violence and exploitation are potential threats in the life of these people. We would like to give voice to vulnerable groups. We have the means to make them heard by other groups of society out of their reach. Their stories can travel beyond national borders thanks to our international network. Raising awareness can contribute to the reduction of stereotypes and prejudices and create more respect for vulnerable groups of people.

We believe that the vulnerable groups should be empowered to play an active role in society, instead of being just a target of solidarity. Therefore we want to provide opportunities for social inclusion in voluntary projects, where they can make a real contribution.

To reach this goal, we create an environment at our projects, where disadvantaged and stigmatized people can feel safe and accepted, where they can participate equally to others, and develop new skills and competencies which can help them to withstand impacts from multiple stress factors they are exposed to.

Our experiences with vulnerable groups, especially with unemployed youth, marginalized migrants and asylum seekers, roma communities as well as people living in or around conflict or post conflict areas, help us to tackle discrimination and to create solidarity.

Tools and methods

- Itemize the problems vulnerable groups experience in getting involved in voluntary work and address them accordingly. Share these ideas among branches
- Provide more thorough support for volunteers from vulnerable groups, who are having more difficulties joining in volunteer projects
- Make easier access to workcamps for volunteers with fewer opportunities
- Strengthen the work of SCI on social inclusion
- Organize trainings for volunteers to work with volunteers with fewer opportunities (campleaders, campaign multipliers, youth exchange group leaders, staff members...)
- Engage people with fewer opportunities to travel at a local level in volunteer work, for example refugees. To not only organise a seminar about refugees, but actively involve them
- Organize seminars/trainings on topics regarding people without a voice and involve those people in the project
- Make contact with other like-minded organisations consisting of 'people without a voice'
- Organise campaigns reaching beyond the SCI network, that address the lives of people from vulnerable groups
- Ensure a safe environment for volunteers to work with their fears regarding different cultures, and support them in finding a way how to reduce them
- Launch specific projects involving people from different cultural backgrounds to initiate first steps of dialogue in conflict /post-conflict regions
- Engage in long-term voluntary projects in cooperation with diverse vulnerable groups to ensure long-lasting impact
- Organize a campaign on Social Inclusion to enhance visibility of actions and solidarity
- Involve migrants and refugees in Social Inclusion projects
- Add new features on the OPS to facilitate the exchange of volunteers with fewer opportunities
- Give visibility to successful stories on social inclusion

Enabling Actions

These actions are areas where we want to strengthen SCI as an organization. They were defined after the assessment of the current situation of SCI, the experiences we all gathered during our years of commitment to the movement. These are like the pillars of the building: without these pillars we won't manage to realize our strategic goals and objectives. They address our aims for organizational development, and provide a stable background for realising our activities in the spirit of SCI.

Co-operation

That we continue/become an effectively functioning international movement, with an established framework of internal and external communication, self-developed technical tools (like OPS) and with common evaluation of exchanges. That we have a well-functioning Secretariat which supports the co-operation between the branches, and keeps up our international profile.

Sharing

That we support each other to build strong national branches by sharing our educational resources and by the improvement of knowledge management within the Movement. That the stability of our national branches is primordial to reach our goals, and each of them is the primary contact for new volunteers, local project partners and the community. That we share information about the various projects of our branches, to ensure continuous visibility and support networking within the Movement.

Advocacy

That we engage in co-operation and advocacy to make our voice heard together with like-minded organisations, which share our values and vision of the world.

Financial strength and transparency

That we diversify our sources of income to acquire financial stability and flexibility. We develop our capacity to attract incomes from large scale projects and individual donors. While at the same time we take care of transparency and we strive to present a balanced budget every year.

Russia, 2012 📷 Evgeny Krkhanov

Sweden, 2014 📷 Suderbyn

Spain, 2012 📷 Anne Medley

India, 2009 📷 Olga Anzalone

Capacity building

That we focus on developing and building capacity in Europe and Asia which are the continents where SCI is wider spread. That we also support our Branches and Groups in America, Africa and Oceania and we stay open to requests for increased presence in these continents.

Communication

That we develop and promote the image and reputation of SCI as one Movement throughout all websites, publication and any outreach material. That we communicate as a worldwide movement made by volunteers and for volunteers with a unique approach towards local and global issues, while at the same time, our branches have the freedom and flexibility to adapt their communication style.

India, 2009 ◙ Olga Anzalone

Kosovo, 2012 ◙ Aleksandra Hiltmann

A glimpse into the future

We are as proud of our past as of our future.

At the beginning of this document we took a look at our present: the world, as it is now. We stopped for a moment to see where do we stand, what are the current challenges which we need to face. Our commitment towards the change we want to see in this world in the coming years will be realised through our goals and objectives.

These are words - we are engaged to turn them into deeds.
Why do we do this? For what do we make all these efforts to reach our goals?

Because we know that one day we will reach a point in human history when:

- Diversity and intercultural dialogue will be valued more than pure gold

- Human rights will be taught as much and considered as useful as the chemical table of the elements

- Working on social inclusion will not be possible, since marginalizing and excluding will simply not be an option

- The color of skin will only matter when choosing which clothes to wear

- No hand shall take up a weapon, even to fight for peace

- Non violent communication will be taught as a second language to the same extent as English is taught nowadays

- Ecological and social sustainability will be taught in elementary schools everywhere alongside the alphabet

- The civil service will be in everyone's educational curriculum as the final step to becoming an adult

- Volunteering and working together will be seen as one of the main means to building society, it will be considered as one of the most important tools to achieve a culture of peace and understanding

- Volunteering will be seen as the way to give back to society and make it better, not just something to use to fill gaps in reduced government budgets

- Volunteering will be handled as a right not as a hobby or a luxury

One day in the future all this will be guaranteed by our society. The road to get there is still long. But alongside many different people the whole SCI family is walking towards peace and understanding.

Our vision is sometimes crashed by the present and it's not so easy to focus on the horizon. We have to learn not to ask ourselves how many goals we have achieved, but how much closer we are to the future we want to achieve. So do not ask us in a year what we have achieved with our projects currently running. Ask us ten or twenty years from now.

The resources of the world are scarce and we either learn not to consume our planet or we will face more and more wars in the future.

In 2014 we remembered the 100th anniversary of the First World War, while we witnessed many new conflicts and wars. Unfortunately in many of them we could not do much–only watch and wait on the sidelines for the slaughter to stop–but in some SCI volunteers are working to plant the seeds of peace. As for the last 94 years we have been searching everywhere we can for the opportunity to support the locals to start rebuilding, working alongside former enemies, where possible.

Since 1920 we have accomplished so many goals and so many more we will achieve. The long walk for peace is not easy so we need to realize and enjoy the middle victories on the way. SCI was part of many unimaginable victories. This year the peace seed that SCI planted in the Balkans in the 90's helped turn the devastating flooding in Bosnia and Serbia into a new beginning and a chance to build bridges of solidarity across borders of former enemies.

Till the day the world will not need SCI anymore we know we have no alternative but to keep struggling for a better relationship among every living creature and with our planet. We will keep using peaceful tools to get people together to understand and learn to co-operate with each other.

We see a future which is bright, colorful and full of hope.
One day the shovel will forever have replaced the sword.
We make different worlds possible every workcamp and every day.

Come and join us.

Finland, 2013

Service Civil International

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