



The Seven Strategic Priorities

THE SEVEN STRATEGIC PRIORITIES ARE BASED ON THE NEEDS OF NATIONAL SCOUT ORGANIZATIONS

The content of each of the strategic priorities and why they are considered as a priority is set out below.





YOUTH INVOLVEMENT - revitalising the Scout Method

Scouting is a movement of young people, supported by adults. A fundamental element of Scouting is the Scout Method; which requires the active involvement of young people, from the time they join the Movement, in the process of their own development, and makes each person the principal agent of that process. This is the element which, when correctly applied, makes Scouting attractive to young people and enables their development as self-fulfilled individuals, able to contribute to a better world.

Unfortunately, the Scout method is not always fully applied. Young people are not being adequately prepared for the progressive responsibility and active involvement that are required at all levels in Scouting, starting from the youngest age sections up to institutional involvement in decision-making bodies.

This strategic priority aims at assisting National Scout Organizations in revitalising this fundamental element of our Movement, which is crucial to its attractiveness and its ability to achieve its mission.



ADOLESCENTS - supporting their transition to adulthood

Supporting young people in the transition from childhood to adulthood is at the core of the mission of Scouting as it was founded to help young people in this difficult transition. The relevance and quality of the Scout programme are measured by parents and potential partners, as well as by governmental and intergovernmental agencies, through Scouting's ability to support young people until the age of entering into adult society.

Today adolescence is becoming a crucial challenge in many societies and Scouting often fails to provide a relevant response. Young people express new expectations that the traditional systems are not able to meet: freedom, self expression, equal opportunities, better education, a job, the ability to find a creative role in society, etc. The traditional mould which prepared young people for adult life, is weakened, broken or has not adapted to the changing world. Therefore, when growing out of childhood, young people do not always have efficient and effective support as they move towards adult roles. Adults in all organizations face considerable difficulties in helping young people to meet their expectations.

The ability to respond to the needs and expectations of young people is a key factor for the success of Scouting and its recognition as a reliable contributor to the development of society. Scouting should be perceived as an expert in the adolescent age range, but in many countries, Scout associations are facing difficulties in delivering a programme which is adapted to the needs and expectations of adolescents.

However, there are tried and tested ways of supporting adolescents, which have been used successfully by many associations. These include placing an emphasis on the peer group, giving access to responsibilities and involving young people in decision-making. Another important aspect is developing positive relationships between young people and adults who are able to provide support, confidence, real challenges and opportunities to assist young people in trying out adult roles and acquiring skills recognised by society.

This strategic priority aims at supporting National Scout Organizations in responding effectively to the needs and expectations of adolescents. This will result in an increase in membership in this age-range and enhance Scouting's reputation as an organization which helps young people in their transition to adulthood.



GIRLS AND BOYS, WOMEN AND MEN - respecting differences, promoting equality and sharing responsibility

Scouting contributes to the development of young people; helping to build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.

As society is made up of people of both genders, the vision for Scouting is:

- To provide opportunities to help girls and boys to develop their full potential, respecting individual differences and not being limited by traditional gender roles within their society.
- To enable women and men in Scouting to co-operate on an equal basis, sharing leadership at all levels in associations.

Scouting in most associations has developed from a male organization. Although girls and women may have been members for many years, often not enough consideration has been given to their needs, the programme, leadership opportunities and structures to enable girls and women to participate fully. This can often be clearly seen in membership statistics in National Scout Organizations.

The aim of this strategic priority is to identify the support and tools required to help National Scout Organizations offer equality of opportunity to girls and boys, women and men at all levels in Scouting. This should offer new opportunities for everyone and, through an increase in youth membership and adult leadership, result in a more even balance in the male:female ratio in associations.



REACHING OUT - breaking down barriers and working with all segments of society

If Scouting is to have a significant impact in the world today, it must extend its reach to all segments of society. Serving only traditional “target audiences” limits the Movement’s potential to help build a better world. Scouting must ensure that the education it offers to young people is made available to all who are prepared to adhere to the principles of the Movement, so that they may benefit from the opportunity to become self-fulfilled individuals and play a constructive role in society.

This also applies to adults who wish to serve the Movement in roles that support the education of young people.

There are many features of the Movement that detract from its attractiveness. These range from:

1. youth programmes that are not seen as relevant to the needs and aspirations of young people in some segments of society.
2. policies and practices that – sometimes inadvertently – serve to exclude those who might otherwise wish to join.
3. “external trappings” which are not of fundamental importance but which deter potential members from coming forward.

The aim of this strategic priority is to support National Scout Organizations in identifying and responding to the needs of young people, adults and society where Scouting is not currently having an impact. This should result in an increase in membership and increase Scouting’s impact in the world today.



VOLUNTEERS IN SCOUTING - developing new approaches to broaden the base of adult support

Young people join Scouting voluntarily. Adults too give their time and efforts voluntarily to offer the benefits of Scout education to young people.

Adult volunteers are not necessarily only people who obtain no compensation for the time and money they invest in Scouting. In many countries, this would not be possible and our long established traditional view of "volunteers" therefore needs to be broadened if we want to attract and retain adults who are keen to share their experience, knowledge and values with young people. The new concept of volunteering recognises the need for personal commitment as well as recognition in the community for the work undertaken but it does not exclude compensation for that work. As a result of this new concept of volunteering, it should be possible for new groups of potential leaders to be attracted to Scouting and retained.

With the support of the Adult Resources Policy we therefore need to attract, recruit and retain new types of adults to Scouting. These adults need to be trained to fully identify with the values of Scouting and to share them with (not impose them upon) young people.

This strategic priority aims at redefining the concept of volunteering as applied to Scouting and reviewing policies and practices to help National Scout Organizations recruit and retain a new group of adults in Scouting.



AN ORGANIZATION FOR THE 21st CENTURY - becoming flexible, lean, innovative, and participatory

A key success factor in Scouting's ability to achieve its mission will be its capacity to think and act strategically. Taking on a strategic approach will require a review of the way our Movement is organized – its structures, systems, management, etc. – at all levels. This is all the more important at a time when fundamental technological change is having a far reaching effect on every aspect of an organization's work.

Unfortunately, an objective look at some structures within Scouting shows that Scouting often continues to work with old-fashioned, heavy structures inherited from the early years of the 20th century. Federations, for example, which are an additional structure at national level, duplicate and dilute Scouting's limited resources and weaken its effectiveness. But many countries which have single, non-federated structures also have too many levels which render the decision-making process cumbersome, slow and reactive rather than proactive to societal needs, and top-down rather than truly participative. There are many other examples of how our structures, systems and management are not in tune with the times.

This strategic priority aims at assisting National Scout Organizations, as well as WOSM itself at world and regional levels, to adopt a strategic approach, reviewing their structures, systems and management to enable them to be sensitive to the changing needs of society and to respond quickly and effectively.



SCOUTING'S PROFILE - strengthening communications, partnerships and resources

There are three inter-related subjects which are necessary for the success of Scouting: communications, partnerships with other organizations, and financial resources.

Communications

Effective communications are vital to all aspects of Scouting. From inter-personal communication to mass communication, effective communication is necessary if Scouting is to attract and retain members; to attract and motivate volunteer and professional leaders; and to obtain the financial resources that it needs.

Recognising Scouting's resources, communications must be carefully planned and targeted to get specific messages across to clearly identified groups of people. Modern technologies offer Scouting many new techniques for doing this, more effectively, more efficiently and at a lower cost.

Partnerships

Scouting does not exist in isolation; it is part of the community and it needs to work in partnership with others, from individuals to organizations and institutions at local, national and world levels. Partnerships with others create a synergy and provide benefits that neither could obtain alone. For Scouting to benefit from these partnerships, it must have a good product and communicate this successfully. Today, creating a good public image cannot just be left to chance; it needs a professional approach and positive action.

Resources

Financial and other resources can result from these relationships, but in addition Scouting needs to look specifically at its fundraising needs and opportunities at all levels, putting into place specific programmes for this purpose. Effective fundraising also requires good relationships with others, and good communication.

This strategic priority aims at strengthening Scouting's communications, partnerships and resources at all levels as these are vital in supporting the work to achieve the mission.