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Why a Strategy ?

1.1 Importance of a long-term vision

SECOND CENTURY OF SCOUTING

Scouting will celebrate its centenary in 2007 and enter its second century. Will this be the beginning of a decline or an opportunity for renewal, continuous development and growth?

The first century of Scouting was a success story and Scouting is now one of the few really global organizations. It has adapted to just about all cultural and economic backgrounds. This has resulted in a doubling of its membership every 20 years and a presence in 151 countries world-wide. Its spectacular rebirth in countries of the former communist block is proof that it continues to respond to a fundamental need.

However, we have to face some facts. Membership is falling in some industrialised countries and a number of National Scout Organizations (NSOs) are losing so many of their adolescents that they are fast becoming organizations for children.

Scouting's educational proposal sometimes tries to span too large an age-range or cover too many specific subjects, leaving it unable to respond effectively to the expectations required of it. In the worst cases some Scout associations are questioning their own effectiveness. This can result in a reduction of their own self-confidence and the confidence of society.

MANAGING CHANGE

Renewal implies the ability to identify and manage the changes necessary to meet the evolving needs in each society.

Renewal requires a long-term strategy

To manage change successfully, clear objectives, good planning and sufficient time are needed. A long-term strategy will identify common goals for the Movement and articulate the responsibility of all levels (world, regional, national, local) to reach these goals.

No strategy is possible without a shared vision of the future

No movement can undergo renewal and growth and achieve common goals without a shared vision. A shared vision is vital because it provides the focus for learning and the energy to overcome difficulties. It is also important because it involves people emotionally and is a strong motivating factor.

Building a great organization is like growing a tree: it takes at least 25 to 50 years. Scouting is often compared to an oak tree and our Founder had a long-term vision for Scouting, which is why he was successful. It is now our turn to invest in the future and strengthen our shared vision of Scouting.

1.2 A Vision from our Mission

THE MISSION STATEMENT ADOPTED IN DURBAN

In Durban (1999), the World Scout Conference adopted a mission statement. This was the result of a long collective process undertaken at the Oslo World Scout Conference in 1996. The adoption of this statement was clearly understood as the beginning of a new process towards renewal.

The purpose of the strategy is to implement the mission.

ADOPTING A VISION BASED ON THE MISSION

In Thessaloniki in 2002 a vision for Scouting was adopted, based on the mission. A vision is important because it helps us to prepare ourselves for new challenges. The vision sets out a picture of what we want to achieve in the future and to visualise the Scout Movement we want for the 21st century.

The strategy helps us to realise the vision.

1.3 Strategy versus plan

NOT AN ACTION PLAN BUT A STRATEGY

To realise our vision, it would be unrealistic to propose a single action plan to be implemented by all NSOs. National backgrounds are very different and require specific and different action plans.

A world strategy however makes sense because:

- Based on a shared vision, it strengthens the feeling of belonging to a united, world-wide Movement for both National Scout Organizations and individual Scouts.
- Developed at world level, it enables us to "step back" far enough from the details to help us see the forest rather than the trees.
- International co-operation on common issues enables us to help each other identify the "mental models" we are using and make the necessary "mind-shifts" which are required to find and implement innovative solutions.
- Sharing experience at international level enables us to avoid becoming static and to benefit from success stories and good practices.
- Building up and implementing a world strategy together offers the best opportunity for National Scout Organizations to develop team learning and networking, and to benefit from belonging to a world organization.

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE THROUGH THE STRATEGY?

In *"The Fifth Discipline - The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization"* (1990), Peter M. Senge quotes the manager of a big company:

"In the traditional authoritarian organization, the dogma was managing, organising, and controlling."

However *"In the learning organization, the new 'dogma' will be vision, values and mental models. The healthy corporations will be ones which can systematize ways to bring people together and develop the best possible mental models for facing any situation at hand."*

This is exactly what all of us in WOSM intend to achieve through the world strategy process.

HOW IS THE STRATEGY RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF SCOUTING?

The strategy for Scouting responds to the needs of Scouting because:

- It is based upon the mission of Scouting adopted in Durban.
- It takes into account the key challenges which NSOs are facing in implementing the mission.
- It sets out a shared vision of Scouting for the 21st century.
- It focuses on three main areas which are crucial for the success of Scouting:
 - a) the needs and expectations of young people,
 - b) the motivation of adult leaders to contribute to the mission of Scouting,
 - c) new trends in managing non-governmental organizations (profile, finances, structures and systems).
- It identifies seven strategic priorities which should be used by each National Scout Organization to build up its own action plans.
- It identifies clearly the areas on which the world and regional bodies should focus in order to support associations.

1.4 Sharing responsibilities at all levels of WOSM

The strategy should be an interactive process involving all levels of WOSM:

- Strategic priorities are decided upon and evaluated at world level by the World Scout Conference under the leadership of the World Scout Committee.
- The strategy is to be implemented through action plans undertaken by National Scout Organizations.
- The role of the Regions is to support NSOs in this work by developing co-operation and mutual assistance through Regional plans and Regional events.
- The World Scout Bureau and its Regional Offices will provide assistance and produce tools/materials to support implementation and evaluation.