Better Scouting for More Young People:

ACTION

FOR **GROWTH**

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INTRODUCTION

For over a hundred years, Scouting has been making a real contribution to creating a better world by helping young people to develop their full potential as individuals and to play a constructive role in society. However, Scouting can only have a real impact as a social force if it is able to attract and retain young people - and supporting adults - long enough to really make a difference.

As a voluntary Movement, young people must make a conscious decision to join and to stay. It is therefore unrealistic to assume that Scouting will appeal to all young people. However, there are many more young people – and supporting adults - who would enjoy and benefit from Scouting than we currently serve.

While the growth of our Movement is ultimately the result of delivering high-quality Scouting, haphazard growth is not sustainable. The factors affecting the growth and development of associations vary from one country to another, but, whatever the situation, offering better Scouting to more young people requires a strategic focus.
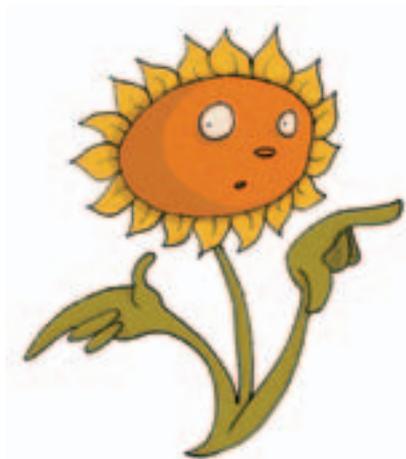
The purpose of this toolkit is twofold:

- it aims to provide an overview of a number of key elements that need to be taken into account when considering a growth strategy. It is not intended as a comprehensive manual that covers every aspect of such a strategy, but rather as a complement to the many other resources that have been produced at world, regional and national levels;

- it is also intended as a means of sharing the many examples of good practice that associations have developed.

It can be used by leaders at any level.

This toolkit comprises two main parts:

- a core document that offers an overview and some examples of good practice;

- factsheets on useful resources, tools, further examples of good practice as well as examples of challenges faced by different associations. This part will be updated periodically when associations send in contributions and when other useful resources become available.

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INTERNAL RESEARCH:
GETTING TO KNOW YOUR MEMBERS

Introduction

In order to develop and manage a growth strategy, your association needs to gather and analyse relevant information about - and from - your membership. This includes the status and trends of your current membership (both youth members and adults). In the light of a broader strategic analysis, it also involves consulting your membership on a range of issues so as to assess how well your association is - and is perceived to be - currently achieving its mission. This involves gathering and analysing quantitative and qualitative information.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine some of the issues that you will need to consider.

How do you define membership?

In order to gather information about membership, the first thing is to determine how you define "membership". For example:

- Is a member anyone who has made the Scout Promise? If so, anyone who has not yet made the Scout Promise is not a member. The problem with this is that practices vary widely as to when young people make their Promise, and therefore many young people taking part in the Scout programme could be eliminated from the count;

- Is a member anyone who has paid the membership fee?

- Is a member anyone who took part in an activity during the year?

- Is a member anyone who has taken part in a specific number of activities during the year?

- Is a member anyone who was registered in a local group when the annual census figures were gathered?

You will either need to agree on a single definition or establish a way of clearly identifying various categories.

For the purpose of this chapter, members include the youth members that Scouting serves, as well as adult volunteers in an active capacity (serving as unit leaders or fulfilling broader administrative or management functions).
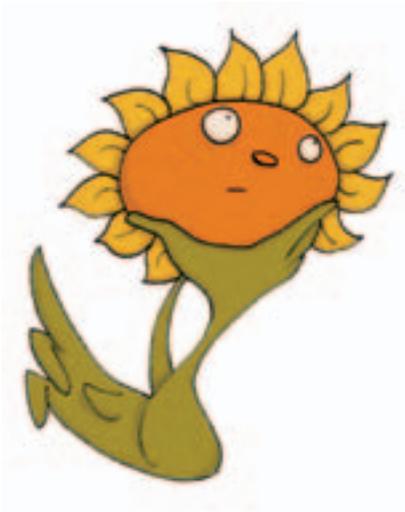
Using tools to measure membership

In order to use membership data effectively, it needs to be collected and managed in a systematic way. If resources are available, members could provide the information via the association's web site, thereby reducing the administrative task of typing it in from paper-based questionnaires.

In **Belgium**, the Scouts en Gidsen Vlaanderen have found an incentive to get leaders to send in updated registration information. Each year the association offers a gift to its members. This enables the association to ensure that addresses, etc., are correct and helps to create a link with members.

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Quantitative information e.g. How many? Where? What age?

There are two basic approaches for collecting and managing quantitative membership data:

Census
This is the systematic and complete count of all registered members (youth and adults) of an association at a specific point in time. A yearly census is compulsory for all member associations of WOSM. A census does not normally gather detailed personal data of members, but often includes basic demographic information such as age and gender, as well as information on the number of units in the various geographical areas and the number and role of volunteers.

Registration system
This can provide more information than a census on individual members. It involves gathering personal data such as name, age, address, volunteering role, etc., of each individual member of an association from the moment they join. This information is normally updated on a regular basis.

While a registration system requires more work than a simple census (and requires greater security measures as it contains personal data), your association will have more accurate and up-to-date information on the state of finances, current membership statistics and patterns.

Setting up a registration system requires a careful analysis of the kinds of information that are useful to know. If it is too complex, members are likely to avoid providing the information and it will be time-consuming to keep up to date. In order to examine trends, the criteria used must be the same; a hastily designed system that changes criteria from one year to the next will be very difficult to understand and will make it impossible to understand the trends.

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Monitoring membership trends

The process of analysing trends in membership growth needs to start with questions such as:

- What age groups do you serve and in what proportion?

- What are the characteristics of your youth members and adult volunteers (age, gender, socio-economic background, geographical distribution, special needs or situation, etc.)?

- At what age do they join? At what age do they leave? How long do they stay?

By examining such information, your association may, for example, discover an increase/decrease in:

- a particular age section in a certain geographical area;

- in one of the older age sections;

- the average length of stay for a youth member (overall or in a particular age section) and/or for an adult;

- adults completing training since the training system had been improved;

- youth membership since the last revision of some aspect of the youth programme;

- membership in a particular ethnic group;

- female members compared to male members in a particular age section;

- recruitment following a change of image, a media campaign, a large event, etc.

Useful information to gather may include:

- **Youth members** - Name, age, location, length of time spent in each age section, ethnicity, religion, profession of parents, etc.

- **Adult members** - Name, age, location, profession, length of time spent as a leader in which age section(s), ethnicity, religion, training, contact address, etc.

Qualitative information – e.g. What do they think? How well are we doing?

Qualitative information complements the information you can obtain from examining numbers. Questionnaire surveys, focus groups, your web site, training events, etc., are all relevant tools that can be used to gather qualitative information about your membership and their perceptions.

In the **Netherlands**, Scouting has developed a mathematical formula to analyse membership evolution, known as the "Healthy Future Perspective". Applying the formula enables the association to gain an overview of the balance between younger and older Scouts, and between youth members and adult leaders. The resulting score provides an early warning system if a Scout group is having difficulty.

Statistical answers to such questions can be summarised on a chart with percentages for each category or characteristic. Once completed, the chart will provide a visualisation of the main characteristics of the present constituency of your association.

When such information is gathered over several years, your association will be able to establish any trends that are occurring (i.e., a tendency in a particular direction over a period of time). An analysis of such information will not explain why such changes are occurring, but the fact of identifying internal trends helps to pinpoint some of the questions that need to be asked.

Why such changes are occurring could be due to external trends in society (migration, the perception of Scouting in a particular area or age group, etc.); it could be due to weaknesses in your association, or a combination of both.

It is therefore necessary to examine and compare related external trends and issues (the subject of Chapter 2), as well as to conduct a deeper analysis of your association in order to find out why.

There is no point launching a massive recruitment drive if, for example, there is a fundamental flaw in the "product" (i.e. the youth programme), if the delivery system is dysfunctional, and so on.

Long-term growth needs to be coherent with your mission and cannot be achieved in isolation from other aspects of the strategy. Numerous tools have been produced at world and regional level, as well as by many national associations, to assist with analysing and developing the various aspects of a broader strategy.

As part of that process, gathering qualitative information from your current membership can help your association to be prepared for the "engine" to move forward. It is just as important to get feedback on what motivated keen young people (or adult volunteers) to join, what they enjoy, in which ways their involvement in Scouting has been beneficial, etc., as it is to assess why certain categories of young people or adults do not join or leave.
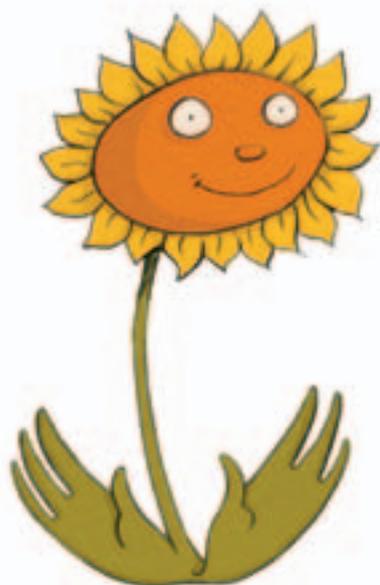
Summary

Gathering and analysing information concerning (and from) your association's current membership (both youth members and adults) offers two powerful tools:

- the ability to monitor membership trends enables you to measure growth so as to manage it, and can trigger alarm bells;

- more qualitative feedback from your membership can provide insights into how well your association is currently achieving what it set out to do as well as insights into areas for improvement.

2

EXTERNAL RESEARCH: GETTING TO KNOW YOUR WORLD

Introduction

In order to prepare and develop a growth strategy, it is important to gather and analyse external information on statistics, trends and issues that are likely to influence your long-term growth prospects.

Doing so will enable you to establish and analyse answers to the following questions:

• What is our current and potential market share?

• What trends, issues and challenges do we need to take into account in order to offer better Scouting to more young people in the context in which we operate?

Understanding your (current and potential) market share

In numbers

Your youth market share (also known as "penetration rate") is your current membership expressed as a proportion of the available youth population in your country. By comparing your membership in different age categories to the available youth population in those same categories, you can establish which age groups are most (or least) attracted to your association.

Doing so can also establish whether your growth rate is increasing or decreasing in relative terms. For example, if your membership in a certain age group has decreased by 5%, but the available youth population in that same age group has decreased by 10%, in relative terms, your market share has, in fact, increased. Conversely, if your membership has increased by 5%, but the available youth population has increased by 10%, then your market share has decreased.

Using demographics to establish a more detailed picture of your market

By making use of demographic statistics and trends to gain more information on the characteristics of your current membership, e.g., your membership of different ages in different geographical areas, gender, socio-economic groups, ethnic / religious groups (see Chapter 1), you can compare that information to national statistics, and thus establish a clearer picture of who you are (or are not) reaching.

Demography is the study of the size, growth, age and geographical distribution of human populations. **Demographics** are the characteristics of those populations, such as: age, sex, income, occupation, education, geographic origins, current location, ethnicity, family size and marital status, among others.

Source: http://economics.about.com/library/glossary/bldef-demography.htm

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Such information can assist your association in determining your strategic options in terms of your target market (age groups, gender, expanding within your traditional market, reaching out to new segments, etc.), and establishing and monitoring a realistic growth target.

To take an example: your association may have a high market share at specific ages, and a much lower one at specific other ages.

Questions to consider might include:

- Why is our association successful in attracting young people of this age?
  - Are they simply easier to market to?
  - Do parents see more benefit/ convenience in encouraging their children to join at this age?
  - Is the youth programme particularly appropriate for this age range?
  - Are more volunteers enthusiastic about working with this age range?
  - Do young people have more free time/fewer commitments at this age?

- Why is our association **not** successful in attracting young people of this age?
  - Are they more difficult to market to?
  - Are we not communicating what Scouting is about in a way that makes it sound exciting and worthwhile?
  - Do parents see less benefit in encouraging their children to join at this age?
  - Is the youth programme inappropriate for this age range?
    o Are there age section transition issues involved?
    o Is the popularity of Scouting with a much lower age range giving the wrong image of Scouting to young people of greater maturity?
    o Does it correspond to developmental changes in young people at this age? If so, is the structure of current age sections inappropriate?
  - Does it correspond to the age at which young people change schools (with different social circles, or less proximity to the Scout group they belonged to)?
  - Do we still have old-fashioned traditions that appear meaningless?
  - Are there fewer volunteers enthusiastic about working with this age range?
  - Do young people have less free time/more commitments at this age?
  - Etc.

In **Egypt**, the Scout association works with UNICEF and other organisations to combat child labour. For the children, this has involved a programme adapted to their needs: literacy, vocational training, health education, etc., as well as work to improve their living and working conditions. At the same time, it involves providing training and a micro-credit system for their vulnerable mothers.

SCOUTS IN **SUDAN** ARE REACHING OUT
TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN REFUGEE CAMPS
IN ORDER TO BRING SMILES BACK TO
THEIR FACES.

© WSB Inc. / Sudan Boy Scouts Association

In the **USA**, the rapidly growing Hispanic
population represents a large potential
market for Boy Scouts of America.
However, the number of young Hispanics
in Scouting has been comparatively low.
Research revealed that many families
thought that Scouting was only for wealthy
people and that they had no family history
of Scouting. Considerable work has been
undertaken to produce parent-oriented
Scouting booklets and resources for
recruitment executives, and to develop
relationships with Hispanic community-
based organisations and businesses.

As a growth strategy will require a
proportionate increase in the number
of adult volunteers to lead units
and support other adults, gathering
similar kinds of information about
your current and potential volunteers
is therefore a necessary component
of your strategy as well. For example,
a range of age-related questions
could also be asked of adult
volunteers:

* Why does the association tend to
  attract volunteers in a certain age
  bracket?
  - Is this due to time/employment/
    family constraints?
  - Do the perceived benefits of
    volunteering change with age?
  - Etc.

Clearly, such questions also need
to be explored in terms of other
characteristics (gender, socio-
economic groups, etc.).

For long-term growth to occur, your
association will need to take into
account long-term trends that affect
the young people that you want to
serve, the adults that you need, and
which may affect your organisational
systems and structures.

A wide variety of demographic trends
to explore exists on the web and
elsewhere. Depending on the context
in which your association operates,
some will obviously be more relevant
than others.

Some trends and issues affecting young people

Attracting and retaining young people requires keeping up to date on youth trends and the challenges, issues and pressures that they face. In some cases, there may be new - or increasing - needs, expectations and interests, new ways of fulfilling them or – on the contrary – fewer means of doing so.

Political issues

- Many governments have developed or are strengthening **youth policies**. Is this the case in your country?
  - If so, what can your association do to take full advantage of the opportunities that this offers to young people?
  - If not, what can your association do to actively promote the development of such a policy?

Economic issues

- In some parts of the world, **young people have to work** all day, in what can be unhealthy conditions, doing repetitive tasks, in order to support their families. Some associations have established projects with fair trade practices whereby young people work less, and are given access to schooling and Scouting. Is this an issue in your country?
  - If so, what solutions can your association offer?

- In many parts of the world, young people do not have access to Scouting due to **economic barriers**. The cost of transport, uniforms, camps, etc., is beyond the financial means of families.
  - What can your association do to reduce costs or find public or private funding?

Social issues

- Young people, particularly adolescents, often seek **greater involvement** in matters that affect them, their peers and the society in which they live. The youth programme of many associations includes active involvement in a number of areas such as the Rights of the Child, the Millennium Development Goals, HIV/AIDS prevention, the rights and status of girls and young women, peace and conflict resolution, action for the environment, child prostitution, etc.
  - In what ways can you increase youth involvement in such issues?

- **Urban violence, xenophobia, bullying and a gang culture** are increasing in many countries. The type of young people who become involved in street gangs, for example, would not typically be attracted to "traditional" Scouting. That said, many of the needs and expectations that attract young people to street gangs are similar to Scouting (taking action in a peer group, taking responsibility for different aspects of group life, the need for recognition, etc.).
  - What can your association do to combat the causes of these phenomena and address the real needs of these young people that are being expressed in a destructive way?
  - What would need to change in what your association usually offers?
  - How could you recruit volunteers to work with these young people?

Scouts in **Guyana** are working to combat bullying, reduce violent behaviour in young people and promote SMAC - Spreading the Message to Avoid Conflict.

In **Bangladesh**, the university gives academic credit to students involved in Scouting. This has generated an increase in the number of Rovers.
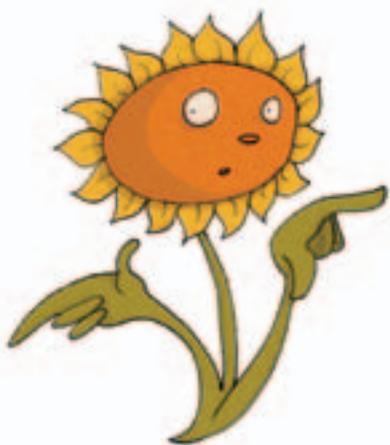
- In some countries **war or civil unrest** and **natural disasters** have created vast quantities of refugees or internally displaced persons. Is this a situation in your country?
  - If so, how could your association reach out to them?

- The scourge of **HIV/AIDS** has created a devastating situation for families worldwide. Children and young people are having to look after siblings, earn a living, and may be HIV positive themselves.
  - In what ways can your association reach out to these young people?

- Young people in **orphanages, residential care, boarding schools, prisons, hospitals**, etc., generally do not have access to Scouting.
  - What can your association do to reach out to these young people, and how would the traditional way of offering Scouting need to be adapted?

- Many young people with **disabilities who live at home** do not have access to Scouting.
  - What can your association do to help these young people to benefit from Scouting?

- In some countries, there is a **negative public perception** concerning Scouting (militaristic, a children's movement, etc.). In some cases, the image may correspond to reality (or a past reality); in other cases, the association has simply not addressed the issue of how Scouting is perceived. Is this the case in your country?
  - If so, what does your association need to do about it?

- In many countries, there has been a major trend in the **rural poor moving to urban areas**. Is this an issue in your country?
  - If so, what implications can you foresee and what can you do to reach these young people?

- Many associations are open to **girls and young women**, but they are often a minority. In some cases, it is because the association has done little to address their needs, expectations and interests; in others, parents may be wary of the risk of inappropriate behaviour.
  - What can your association do about this?

- In many Western societies, young people are becoming increasingly **socially mobile**, or at least are seeking opportunities to discover the world and other cultures. Many might enjoy taking part in community development projects abroad.
  - To what extent has your association taken this into account?

- Many societies have undergone a substantial **increase in migrant populations**.
  - What particular needs or expectations might they have?
  - What can your association do to reach out to these young people?
  - Would the creation of special units be appropriate or would integration into regular units be more appropriate?

© Clean Up The World

Legal issues

- What new or forthcoming **legislation** regarding youth organisations is likely to come into force?
  - How is this likely to affect your association and how can you prepare to deal with it?

Environmental issues

- The majority of young people who are likely to be attracted to Scouting find adventure and challenge in life in nature. Many adolescents, in particular, feel **concern about the environment and an ecological lifestyle**.
  - In what ways are nature, the environment, ecology and sustainability integrated into the youth programme?
  - To what extent is this concern reflected by your association as a whole, and especially by adults who should be serving as role models?

Guardio das Aguas is the biggest Scout group in **Brazil**, with several hundred young Scouts. Many of its members come from areas with serious economic and social problems: poverty, drug trafficking and urban violence. Through taking part in environmental projects, the Scouts have an opportunity to learn new skills, thus boosting their self-esteem and encouraging them to contribute to the life of their community.

- In some societies, the **length of time** that young people stay in youth organisations has diminished.
  - What factors influence this and what can your association do to increase retention?

Technological issues

- In many societies there has been a phenomenal increase in the time young people spend **watching TV or surfing the internet**.
  - What can your association do to promote a more active lifestyle and encourage these young people to join Scouting?

Scouts in **Azerbaijan** are bringing together leaders and young people from Azerbaijan, Georgia and Russia at a special training camp on the border of Azerbaijan and Russia. The purpose is to help young people increase their involvement in decision-making in the local and regional communities and to learn about diversity management, conflict resolution, democratic citizenship, civil society and participatory youth work.

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Some trends and issues affecting volunteering

Trends and issues facing voluntary organisations and volunteering differ from country to country, but they need to be taken into account if your association is to grow.

As a result of considerable research into membership trends, the Growth and Development Unit of the Scout association in **Greece** has been able to analyse the mobility patterns of young adults. As many of the young adults move away to attend university, or to start new jobs, the Unit encourages them to become involved in their new area. This has resulted in new ideas and experiences for Scout units, and for the young adults it helps to create a feeling of belonging to a big family.

Political issues

- More and more governments consider **volunteerism as a national priority**. Is this the case in your country?
  - If so, how is your government supporting volunteering? How can your association benefit from this support?
  - If not, what can you do to change this attitude?

- Many countries have adopted **policies for ethnic, religious, social and other minorities**. Is this the case in your country?
  - If so, how can your association benefit from these policies to encourage volunteering in minority groups in your country?
  - If not, what can your association do to encourage volunteers to reach out to these groups?

Economic issues

- Economic pressures, such as **poverty or unemployment**, are real obstacles that prevent many people from volunteering.
  - What can your association do to overcome these obstacles?

- Some employers (private and public sectors) encourage volunteering as part of their **corporate social responsibility** programme. Do employers in your country have such programmes?
  - If so, what could you do to benefit from them?
  - If not, how could you promote the concept?

Social issues

- In many countries, the work of voluntary organisations, and thus of volunteers, is becoming more **valued by society**. As a result, more people are choosing to volunteer. Is this the case in your country?
  - If so, how can your association benefit from this trend?
  - If not, what can your association do to enhance the concept of volunteering as a socially meaningful and personally enriching activity?

- Some associations are noticing that a growing number of adults are **no longer prepared to make a commitment to volunteer on a regular basis**, but would be willing to help out on an occasional basis. Is this an issue in your association?
  - If so, how could you make use of occasional help?

- As more voluntary organisations become more professional in the services offered and as many adults are willing to spend less time volunteering, **volunteers expect a high quality of support**. When they receive it, there is a greater likelihood that they, in turn, will fulfil their own function more professionally.
  - What does your association need to do to support volunteers more efficiently and effectively?

- Many adults with **physical disabilities** would enjoy the challenge of volunteering.
  - How could you integrate them into your association?

- In many countries, **lifestyle changes** mean that volunteers are not available at the traditional time (or day of the week) for unit or planning meetings. Is this an issue in your country?
  - If so, what solutions could your association propose?

Technological issues

- The development of **new means of communication** is phenomenal in many countries.
  - Has your association reorganised its information technology (IT) to take advantage of networking with volunteers?
  - Has your association developed new ways of volunteering through the use of IT?

- Not all volunteers will have **access to IT** (or the same level of access), due to age, income, training, availability of broadband, etc.
  - Has your association been able to overcome these issues?
  - If not, what can your association do about it?

Legal issues

- Many countries have adopted laws related to **child protection and safety**. In some cases, the rules, regulations, paperwork, insurance issues, etc., are complex and time-consuming. This can deter people from volunteering to work with young people. Is this the case in your country?
  - If so, what can your association do?

- In some countries, laws governing youth organisations involve **age-related criteria** for adult leaders, which affect public funding. Sometimes, however, the age of potential volunteers does not correspond to this criteria. Is this the case in your country?
  - If so, what can you do about it?

Environmental issues

- More and more adults feel deep concern for the **future of the planet**.
  - How can your association capitalise on this in order to attract more volunteers?
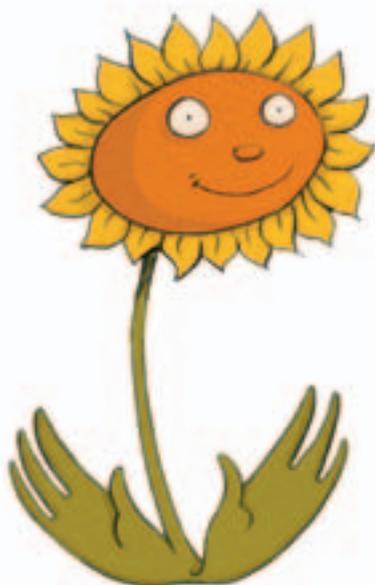
Summary

Relevant information about demographic statistics and trends (both internal and external statistics and trends) will enable you to:

- pinpoint issues to address more clearly;

- gain a more accurate profile of your target markets (potential youth members and adult volunteers);

- have a greater chance of attracting and retaining them through understanding them better;

- be pre-emptive in addressing the trends and issues that will affect what your association offers and how it does so.

3

CHOOSING A STRATEGIC OPTION FOR GROWTH

- **Expanding within** your traditional target group by, for example:
  - creating new units within the same target population;
  - increasing membership in existing units;
  - increasing the length of time members stay.
- **Reaching out** to new population segments by, for example:
  - reaching adolescents and young adults in difficult circumstances;
  - developing a programme in marginal or rural areas;
  - developing a programme for minority groups;
  - introducing coeducation and opening membership to girls
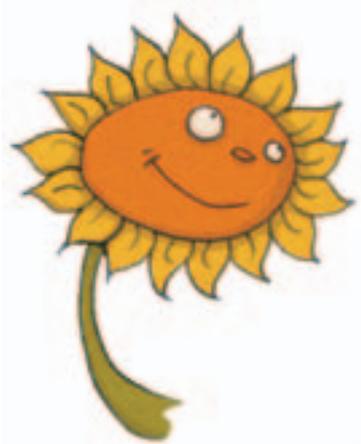
Introduction

Increasing youth membership in your association requires a strategic approach. In terms of target market, your association needs to carefully examine two strategic options.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine what these are, their implications and what needs to be taken into account in order to make an appropriate strategic choice.

Expanding within... reaching out

Assuming that your association has conducted a thorough analysis both of your association and the environment in which it operates, there are two ways of increasing youth membership: by expanding within your traditional target group and/or by reaching out to new population segments. Each option involves its own set of potential implications and consequences.

Expanding within

This aims at recruiting more members from the same traditional population segment. In most cases, there is still room for growth within that particular segment since very few associations have recruited the totality of the potential youth population in any specific group.

Three different approaches to supporting this recruitment drive could be to:

- make changes to the youth programme to better meet the interests, needs and aspirations of young people within that group;
- improve the programme delivery service through better training and support of adult leaders;

- change the image and develop public relations, external communications and branding.

When this approach is used, the minimum potential for growth will follow the foreseeable demographic evolution of this population segment. Reaching beyond this minimum level will depend upon the ability of the association to make its programme more relevant and more attractive.

Reaching out

This will open new possibilities and offers a greater impact in terms of Scouting and responding to needs in society, but this option will require you to do one or more of the following:

- change the image of Scouting;
- introduce changes in the current youth programme;
- develop an entirely new approach for the new group;
- adopt different ways of attracting new population segments;
- discard non-essential elements that are currently preventing or discouraging young people from joining;

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Making a strategic decision

On the basis of all the above, a choice of one, or a combination, of the possible options should be made. If your association has a political will to grow, the choice will be made on the basis of the highest growth potential compatible with the level of acceptance of change and the availability of (or potential ability to procure) the necessary resources, both human and material, to support this move.

Each option has a number of implications that need to be taken into account, such as an increase in training or publication costs, a change of image, the development of new approaches to the youth programme, etc.

The decision as to which segments(s) of the population will be served, together with the prospective demographic evolution in the targeted segment(s), provide an indication of the potential rate of growth. Applying this potential rate of growth to the present membership over a period of time will allow you to define a growth target and adapt it as necessary for planning purposes.

In the **USA**, Boy Scouts of America and Girls Scouts of the USA have worked with mosques and Islamic centres to reach out to young Muslims who would not ordinarily have joined Scouting. The programme is a mixture of traditional Scouting with elements that have been specifically adapted to their faith and culture. The result is that many thousands of young Muslims have benefited from Scouting.

• attract and retain adults who are competent and motivated to support young people in these new segments (and develop specialised training if necessary).

All this needs to be considered very carefully, but those faced with such choices must know, and accept, that changes are bound to be introduced.
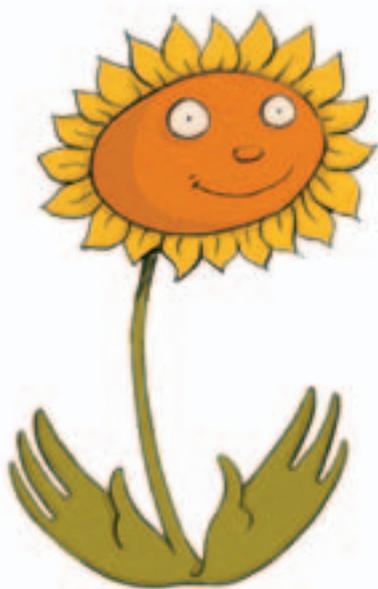
Summary

Long-term growth requires considering the strategic options of expanding within (your traditional target youth population) or reaching out (to new segments of the youth population). While reaching out will have the greatest impact in terms of meeting needs in society, the changes required may be more radical and challenging. Either option requires a serious analysis of where your association is now, where it wants to go and how it intends to get there.
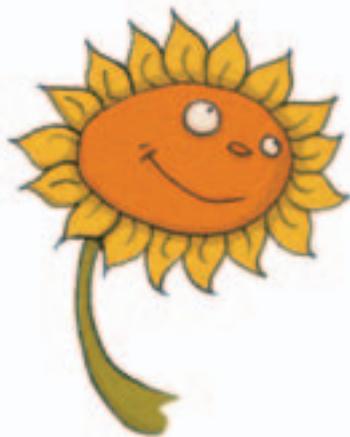
4 SUPPORTING LOCAL SCOUTING

Introduction

The local Scout group is the core of what Scouting is about. Scouting takes place in the communities where people live and in most cases is provided by and for those local people. The local nature of the organisation means that if Scouting is to grow at a world, regional or national level then this growth actually needs to happen locally.

The purpose of this section is to examine how can you use and develop high-quality local support, management and structures to enable adult leaders to provide better Scouting for more young people and drive action for growth.

The Scout association in **South Africa** has been working for many years to bring Scouting to poor communities. Despite the distribution of numerous promotional materials and the creation of many new Scout groups, retention was a problem. In Mpumalanga Province, it was decided to stop creating new groups and to strengthen existing ones. Field officers were appointed to support the new leaders and establish training and equipment needs. Amongst the lessons learned is the need to concentrate on the image of Scouting.

Local support

Support is everything that is done to assist leaders in offering high-quality Scouting. Much of it will be operational, responding to requests for assistance in practical matters. Underlying that is the psychological dimension of knowing that they can count on someone for advice and that someone is available and willing to listen, provide guidance and encouragement when needed.

Providing local support requires people to take the time to make regular contact and build relationships. This can be achieved through team meetings, on a one-to-one basis, socially, through visits to unit meetings, training courses, by telephone or even through text messages and email.

Reviewing the support offered can often highlight changes that need to be made or ways to improve the communication flow. You should ask yourselves: "Do all the adults in our 'sector' know where to get support? Do they get the support they need? Do they have to ask for support, or is it readily available?"

The next step is to identify the support that is needed. An ideal way is to ask the leaders themselves. However, it is important not to promise or raise expectations of a level of support that cannot be delivered.

Areas of support to think about include:

- communications;
- information flow;
- 'workload' of individuals;
- facilities and resources;
- administration and paperwork;
- support structures;
- training.

Once you have created a list of support needs, a list of potential methods for meeting these needs can also be drawn up. The list of methods should be as imaginative as possible, allowing people to think creatively.

Once you have created that list, it is likely that the demands for support will exceed the time and/or resources available. You need to decide who or what needs support most urgently – and tackle those requests first.

Importantly, a plan needs to be established and considered against the timescale, the resources and/or equipment required and their availability. It is also important to remember that support is not about being in control, but about being there to help.

Once the plan is clear and agreed, you can provide the support. It will also be important to review the support provided, to adapt plans as situations change and to ensure that the best possible support is delivered.

Local management

Leaders who act as local managers (e.g., Scout group leaders or district commissioners, etc.) are key people in the growth and development of Scouting. Sound and effective management can have a huge beneficial effect, particularly in encouraging and supporting the other adults and driving growth and development. In particular, the "line management" function in respect of other adults is vital.

Specifically line managers are responsible for:

- **Agreeing on the role** - When an adult is recruited or appointed to a new role, the line manager should be responsible for agreeing on the key elements and responsibilities of the role during the welcome and induction process. Doing this means that both parties are clear about the role, what it entails and how it should be done.

- **Communication** - The line management structure is often also used for communication. Clearly, it is vital that leaders and other adults have access to all the information, resources and materials available to help them in their role. If leaders have access to information that is clear, then their role in Scouting will be made much easier. It is also important that leaders have the opportunity to discuss their views on Scouting.

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In **Finland**, the Scout association needed to reorganise its structure of districts to make them more efficient. In order to overcome the resistance to change, a list was developed of all the tasks that a district needed to do. The smaller districts then realised the need to merge.

- **Resources and equipment** - The line manager may also have responsibility for making sure that adults have the facilities, resources and support that they require in their role.

- **Advice** – One of the most important aspects of being a line manager is the provision of advice. It is not necessary for the line manager to know the answer to everything; helping people think through the issue or explaining how they can find the answer is often a better way of dealing with the matter.

- **Encouragement and motivation** – Saying "thank you", supporting people in difficult situations can make a huge difference. Other things that will help encourage and motivate people include:
  - feeling that you care;
  - knowing that you believe they can achieve what's needed;
  - seeing that you will support them;
  - agreeing achievable goals;
  - being genuine with praise;
  - focusing on positive aspects.

- **Review** - Line managers should meet with each of the adults in their team to carry out a review. Reviews are an opportunity to discuss the role, obtain feedback and agree what they are going to do next. A good review will allow managers to plan how to make the best use of the adults in your sector and to make the adult feel wanted and understood.

Local structures

The creation of a structure for local Scouting is not about adding additional management layers or creating bureaucracies. Instead the structure must ensure that activities and plans can be coordinated, should contribute to the flow of information and assist in the creation and implementation of organisational mission and strategies, particularly those focused upon growth and development.

A wide variety of different structures can be effective; the best structure will largely depend on the particular situation such as the unit size, the geographical distances involved, the communication methods available and the support required. Fundamentally, any structure adopted must be designed to meet the local needs.

Summary

Local support is critical for the growth and development of Scouting, yet, fundamentally, it is simply about good communication and building positive relationships; it is not about complex management structures or an extensive bureaucracy.

When you ensure that adults are provided with the necessary support; when people are engaged and involved, provided with the necessary resources, encouraged, thanked and motivated, they are more likely to be able to provide the young people with a quality Scouting experience. This, in turn, is crucial to attract and retain more young people and adult volunteers.

5

DELIVERING THE YOUTH PROGRAMME IN ALTERNATIVE WAYS

Introduction

Many associations have long-established traditions concerning how and when young people take part in Scouting. In some circumstances, however, potential youth members are denied access to Scouting because the "traditional" way of offering it is not practical. While in many cases these traditional approaches are seen as the only or best way of offering Scouting, in reality, provided the fundamental elements of Scouting are followed, Scouting can be offered in many different ways.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine some of the alternative ways in which you could deliver high-quality Scouting.

Scouting in **Canada** has been working to reach out to young Muslims. Adaptations include: time for observance of spiritual duties, as well as accommodation of dietary restrictions, uniform and a single-gender setting, if required.

Meeting times

In many associations, Scouting is typically provided at the same or similar times of the day and often on the same day of the week.

In some countries, a unit will meet on one (or perhaps two) evenings each week, with each meeting lasting for perhaps one and a half to two hours. In other countries, Scouting is typically school-based, with meetings taking place during the standard school day, timetabled in the same way as the formal lessons.

If Scouting only takes place at the traditional or typical times, some adults and young people may be prevented from becoming Scouts due to their other commitments. For example, a Scout unit based in the suburbs of a city and meeting in the early evening is unlikely to be able to recruit leaders from anyone that commutes into that city for work. Meeting in the early evening may also be a barrier for some young people, particularly if they have to travel into the city for school. If all the Scouting in that suburb is offered during weekday evenings, a considerable number of adults and young people from the community would effectively be prevented from taking part.

However, many different meeting times and formats are possible. Options that could be considered include:

- **Weekend Scouting** - Could Scout unit meetings be held every Saturday or Sunday?

- **Weekend Scouting** - Could Scout unit meetings be held at the weekend once or twice a month (perhaps meeting for half a day or a full day)?

- **After-school Scouting** - Could Scouting be run directly after school finishes (as an after-school club)?

- **Lunchtime Scouting** - Could Scouting be held mid-week at lunchtimes (perhaps in schools or in local venues close to schools)?
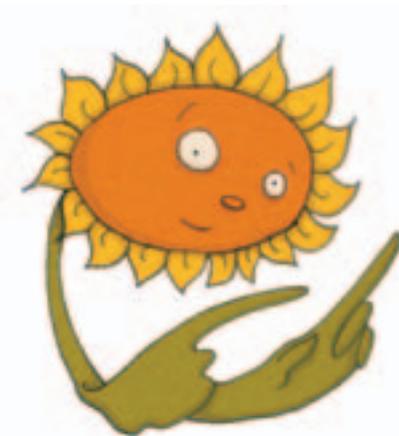
When considering adopting a different meeting time or format, the following issues should be considered:

- availability of leaders and other adult support;

- availability of young people;

- availability of meeting venue;

- cost of meeting venue;

- availability of other resources / equipment;

- the ease of progression of young people from one age section to the next (e.g., moving from Cub Scouts to Scouts);

- the meeting times and format of other Scout units in the area.

Scouting using alternative means of communication

In some situations, gathering young people together frequently is difficult or impossible to achieve. This is the case for young people living in remote areas or in cities or other urban areas where travelling to a Scout meeting, particularly at night, might be unsafe or inadvisable. However, Scouting can be practised without physically meeting very often.

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Scout units that do not meet frequently do need some method of communicating effectively and regularly with their young people. Suitable methods of communication might include:

- e-mail;

- internet;

- social networking sites (Facebook, My Space etc.);

- two-way radio;

- mail;

- visits.

In many cases, one or more of these methods will need to be used in combination.

Unit leaders can use such communication methods to provide:

- aspects of activities that Scouts can complete independently or with their parents' support and / or supervision;

- support and guidance;

- opportunities for the young people to network with each other.

Meeting in real life should be encouraged when feasible, either on a regular basis (e.g., once a month, or once every few months), or for camps and other special events.

Special locations

Scouting can be provided anywhere and in almost any situation and can be particularly successful in institutions and other special locations such as residential schools, hospitals and prisons. In many cases these institutions provide an opportunity to offer Scouting to young people who would not otherwise have access to it.

When considering offering Scouting in an institution or other special location you should consider the following issues:

- the views and support of the principal, head or governor of the institution concerned;

- the availability of appropriate adult leadership;

- the availability of the necessary resources (financial and practical);

- the availability of a suitable meeting venue.

Exactly how a unit would run depends largely upon the specific issues surrounding the institution concerned. For long-stay institutions such as residential schools, long-stay prisons, etc., Scouting can be provided using much the same approach as it would in the local community.

Where the young people have relatively short stays, such as is the case in many hospitals, a different style may need to be adopted, with new teams being formed on each occasion and activities that can be completed in a single meeting.

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In all cases it is important to ensure that there is a method of encouraging young people to remain Scouts once their contact with the institution has ended.

Cobweb Scouting

A "Cobweb" unit is a possibility to consider for young people who live in isolated villages or hamlets. It consists of between two and six teams of young people in an age section, each with a number of young people and an adult leader or helper, with each team meeting locally. The teams then come together for a more traditional unit meeting on a regular basis, either in the most convenient centre or in rotation around each village.

Typically the adult leader / helper for each team would:

- attend / run the weekly meetings;

- work with the Scouts to help them advance in their personal progression scheme;

- support the Scouts in "their" team;

In the **UK**, Scouting has been run in London's Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children for more than 40 years. Each week eight leaders work with children between the ages of six and 16 years old, offering games and crafts, map and compass work, cooking and camping skills. The children are also taken on field trips in a minibus specially adapted for wheelchairs. Many of the young patients that were not Scouts when they were admitted to hospital, leave the hospital eager to join a Scout group in their local community.

- arrange transport to the regular unit meetings;

- attend the regular unit and planning meetings;

- maintain contact with parents.

One leader would be responsible for the whole unit and would:

- plan the weekly meetings (where possible with the other leaders / helpers);

- monitor the Scouts' progression;

- arrange the regular unit meetings;

- visit the team meetings as regularly as possible.

When organising a "Cobweb" unit, situations in which one adult runs a team meeting alone should be avoided.

Each team will need a place to meet. This could be in someone's home, barn or farm building, a classroom, or village hall. The venue does not need to be permanent and could change depending on the programme or activity. The regular unit meetings could make use of an existing Scout headquarters, campsite / activity centre or hall.

Mixed age-group units

Scouting works well through age-based units in which there are sufficient young people in each age group. But what happens when there are too few young people? Your association may wish to consider mixed age-group units where:

- there are too few young people in a local community area to run age-based units;

- a new Scout group is starting and there are insufficient leaders or young people to run age-based units in the first instance;

- a Scout unit wishes to start the "next" age section and there are only a few Scouts ready to "move up";

- the particular needs of the young people mean that a mixed-age unit will better meet their needs.

The advantages of such an approach include:

- increased retention of young people and ease of transfer between age sections;

- provision of a flexible way of recruiting adult volunteers without the need to assign them to specific roles when starting a Scout group;

- a more flexible leadership team able to work with different age groups as local circumstances and the programme demand.

However, it is important that, in addition to the usual roles, the leaders of a mixed age-group unit are able to:

- provide activities and resources for the complete age range;

- manage the different projects, personal progression schemes, etc., for the different age sections;

- adapt their leadership style in accordance with the needs of the different age groups;

- complete the necessary leader training for each of the relevant age groups.
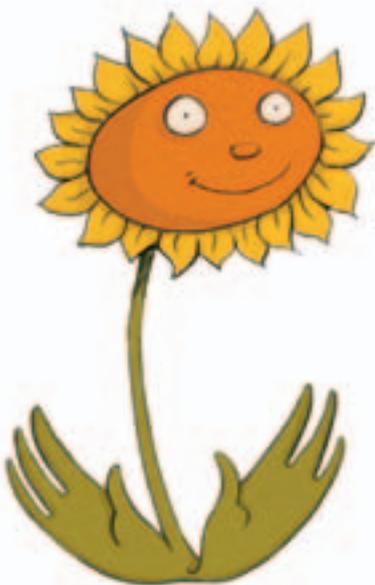
Summary

The traditional approach to (and format of) Scouting may effectively prevent a number of young people from becoming Scouts. However, with creative thinking, this need not be the case. Provided Scouting's purpose, principles and method are maintained, the opportunities for offering quality Scouting are only limited by the imagination.

Some alternative ways of offering Scouting to more young people include changing when units meet, how they meet (virtual networking), in which groupings they meet, where they meet and the age groupings in which they meet.

6

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING THE ADULTS YOU NEED

Introduction

No strategy to offer better Scouting to more young people can be effective without examining how to attract and retain a sufficient quantity of adult volunteers who are – and will continue to be - motivated and effective. This applies equally to the adults who deliver Scouting directly to young people and to those in broader administrative or management functions.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of five strategic areas in the development of adult resources.

In **Sweden**, a study showed that leaders spent an average of five hours on Scouting. This led the association to review how planning, running and evaluating Scout meetings, hikes, etc., as well as training, could be encompassed within this weekly timeframe. The result is that recruitment has become easier and is thus supporting growth.
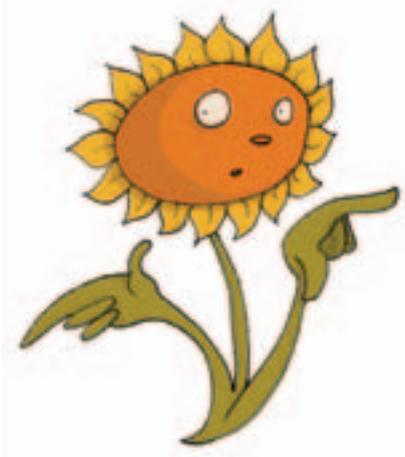
Recruitment

Simply sitting back and hoping that enough adults will volunteer their services will not help your association to grow.

Your association will need to develop and maintain an active adult recruitment strategy and support local Scout groups with guidelines, ideas and tools so as to carry out adult recruitment in an effective and sustainable way. Work in this area needs to be carried out in close cooperation with those responsible for communication so as to ensure that the right messages are targeting the right audience.

A number of associations have developed efficient recruitment strategies with tools adapted to their target groups.

Some of the key elements that you need to consider for a successful recruitment exercise include:

- defining SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-limited);

- analysing your target group;

- analysing your environment;

- establishing appropriate social marketing (image and branding), addressing the four following requirements:
  - right offer;
  - right moment;
  - right place;
  - right promotion;

- evaluating your action through the pre-established indicators.

Training

There are many approaches towards training within Scouting. Many training systems are based on tradition and may not be adapted to today's realities.

Implementing an adult resources development strategy requires a thorough periodic review of the training system and a search for more efficient approaches that are better adapted to the realities of volunteering today.

Provided that your association has clearly established standards, training can be provided in a variety of ways that offer adults more choice as to the method and content so that it meets their own specific needs, is as convenient as possible and is considered to be personally enriching.

An effective training system needs to be:

- flexible;

- available;

- accessible;

- motivating;

- relevant.

In the **UK**, all new leaders follow a training module known as "Growing the Movement". This gives them tools about development planning, promotion and recruitment.

Support

All adults in your association not only need training to complement their abilities, but also continuous support to assist them in their work and to maintain their motivation.

Effective support involves:

- **An operational dimension:** providing the necessary means for adults to carry out their responsibilities through personal contact, tools and materials;

- **An emotional dimension**: addressing the many different – often implicit - expectations that adults have.

Both dimensions are crucial to maintaining motivation.

Through the relevant state training agencies in **Australia**, the government has accredited the Woodbadge and other advanced training programmes for leaders. This has given adults in Scouting recognition for the training and skills they have developed. It has also made Scout training recognised within the wider community and industry.

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Recognition

Today, more and more associations are becoming aware of the need to develop a policy to enable them to recognise the contribution of adults, in particular, that of volunteers. A recognition policy can have the following impact:

- **On adults by:**
  - contributing to the development of their personal identity;
  - consolidating their feeling of commitment, through noble and strong values;
  - reinforcing self-confidence through positive feedback on the person's actions and attitudes;
  - strengthening motivation and providing greater job satisfaction.

- **On the association by:**
  - creating a friendly and positive atmosphere and an asset for the association;
  - mobilising and retaining more members;
  - stimulating members' investment and performance.

- **On clients (young people, parents, etc.) by:**
  - projecting a positive image through the satisfaction that members express;
  - providing quality services generated by the virtuous circle of recognition and performance.

Retention

Considering the energy and resources required to recruit, train, support and recognise the work of adults in your association, attention needs to be paid to retaining them for a mutually acceptable mandate under mutually acceptable conditions.

To achieve this, work will be needed on the following elements:

- **Quality:** everyone involved in your association expects quality in terms of services, image, relationships, etc. If volunteers receive quality treatment, they are more likely to deliver quality in return;

- **Values:** everyone needs to adhere voluntarily to a structure with shared common values;

- **Satisfaction:** both in what people actually do and in relationships with others, which implies a constant effort to listen to and support them;

- **Trust:** not only in managers and colleagues, but also in your association's capability to succeed in its mission.

Indicators of good retention are:

- a reduction in the turnover of adults;

- better quality in the services provided by qualified adults;

- enthusiastic leaders, who are able to convey a positive image of your association, generate interest in it and attract others to join.
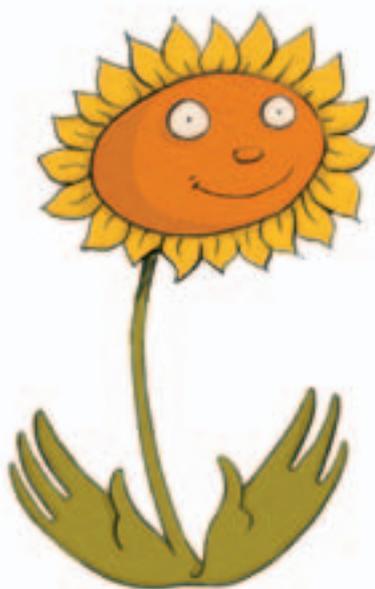
Summary

Offering better Scouting to more young people – whether you are expanding within or reaching out – requires a thorough examination of how your association can attract and retain a sufficient quantity of motivated and effective volunteer leaders, and maintain their motivation and effectiveness throughout their time in the association. Developing adult resources involves a strategic approach based on five key areas: recruitment, training, support, recognition and retention.

7

ENSURING A CHALLENGING AND RELEVANT YOUTH PROGRAMME

Introduction

Scout associations have different approaches as to how they define "success" in terms of youth membership. Whatever the approach, the appeal and relevance of the youth programme to young people throughout the age sections is evidently crucial to the growth of the Movement. After all, young people must make a conscious decision to join and they are free to leave at any time.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine a number of youth programme issues that impact on growth.
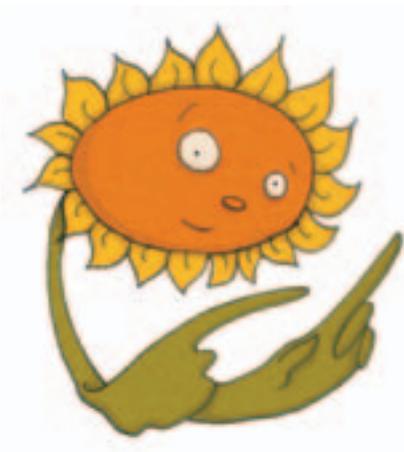
Ensuring that all age sections are attractive and relevant

Some people feel that an association is only truly growing if the youngest age section is growing. Other people feel that the strength of the Movement is measured by the number of young people in the final age section who achieve the top award in an association.

Whatever the approach, it is important to have an overview of what is happening in all the age sections. Doing so helps to ensure that Scouting offers a balance of continuity and novelty in the sections, thus encouraging current members to stay. It also helps to ensure that each section is perceived as attractive and relevant to young people. This is important both for current members deciding whether or not to continue and for potential newcomers to any section along the way.

The Youth Programme

Youth programme is the totality of what young people do in Scouting (**the activities**), how it is done (**the Scout Method**) and the reason why it is done (**the purpose**).

Youth involvement is the term used to describe how our youth members are not only included and consulted in relation to decisions on the programme, but also take an active role in the decision-making bodies within an association.

Challenge and adventure in the programme

Challenging young people

The majority of young people who join Scouting are seeking challenge, adventure and excitement. This therefore needs to be provided from the youngest section all the way through to the final section.

The youth programme must be progressively challenging as young people move through the sections. This means ensuring that the activities are appropriate for the age range while always offering something to look forward to. If the programme is not challenging, or is too "easy" for them, young people will not join or will walk away.

Challenge and adventure may be new kinds of activities, or familiar activities that become progressively more complex, or opportunities to explore new environments. Scouting can also link with other bodies to support challenging and adventurous activities for the older age sections.

Involving young people in deciding what they do and giving them responsibility for organising themselves is instrumental in providing a greater sense of challenge and achievement.

In **Iceland**, Scouting works with officially-recognised voluntary rescue teams to offer challenging adventurous activities and specialist skills.

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Recognising progression

Young people need to feel that their efforts and achievements are recognised by others. A constructive climate of encouragement and praise is important to maintain motivation. Young people also need to measure their progression and achievements. One such way is through badges and awards.

Supporting adults

Clearly, offering a challenging and stimulating experience to young people means that adult leaders need appropriate training and support, as well as the necessary means and tools to do so.

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The relevance of the youth programme

Reviewing the youth programme

To ensure that the youth programme is attractive and relevant to young people in contemporary society, it must be periodically reviewed and revised where necessary. The youth programme needs to take into account emerging needs, expectations and interests, while remaining faithful to Scouting's fundamental principles.

The World Programme Policy, adopted in Paris in 1990, encouraged associations to undertake this process. A number of tools exist at world and regional levels to help associations to do so. Many associations have already completed their revision and have a wealth of experience to share.

Ensuring a socially relevant youth programme

A relevant youth programme cannot be divorced from the world in which young people live. It should be able to help young people address real issues in age-appropriate ways and to help channel youthful idealism in a constructive direction. If young people feel that Scouting offers them challenging opportunities to help create a better world, they are more likely to stay in Scouting. At the same time, if Scouting's contribution is appreciated in society, it can serve to attract more members.

In addition to the innumerable challenging opportunities to become involved in meeting real needs in the local community, there are two issues that have a global appeal and are at the heart of Scouting: peace and the environment. Both offer meaningful challenges to young people and put Scouting's values into action, thereby helping young people to feel more engaged and more aware of the fact that they belong to a worldwide Movement.

Involving young people

One of the challenges of Scouting's mission is to actively involve young people in matters that concern them, and to take responsibility for doing so. This means consulting them, helping them to make decisions and to become involved, both individually and collectively. This helps to ensure that Scouting remains attractive and relevant to them, and also provides feedback to the association.

Scouting defines three aspects of involving young people in decision-making: in the unit (involving them in shaping and evaluating their experiences), institutionally (including them on decision-making bodies) and in the community (helping to create a better world through active citizenship and community projects).

In **Belgium**, the Fédération Catholique des Scouts BP offers a participatory approach to decision-making throughout the association. This begins in the units using a project approach, in which young people have influence over planning and managing their activities. Adult leaders are elected by their peers in the Scout group and, gradually, more young adults are becoming involved in decision-making at national level.

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Ireland has experienced long-term conflict between communities deeply divided along political and religious lines. Scouting, however, has been working throughout to break down the barriers through cross-community and cross border initiatives. There have been joint initiatives and training courses, and youth exchange programmes. A peace programme on citizenship has been developed to help Scouts understand their own community, learn about stereotypes and prejudice and accept diversity in their communities and country.

Offering a relevant youth programme... to whom?

As a strategic option, reaching out to young people in segments of society that an association does not normally cater to is considered in Chapter 3. This is because the decision to do so has many more implications than just the youth programme.

Nonetheless, from a youth programme perspective, it is important to consider what would need to be adapted, while retaining the essential characteristics of Scouting, to attract and retain young people:

- living in conflict zones;

- living in violent urban areas;

- living in long-term institutions (prisons, residential schools, hospitals, orphanages, homes for those with disabilities, etc.);

- from minorities (ethnic, religious, etc.);

- who have been child soldiers;

- who live on the streets;

- who are refugees;

- who have to work from a young age to help support the rest of the family;

- with special needs living at home in a community;

- etc.

Scouts in the **Great Lakes Region in Africa** have developed a peace education programme, training young people to be peace mediators in their communities. This has encouraged young people to join Scouting, to develop skills in mediation and to contribute to lasting peace in their countries.

Offering a relevant youth programme in the final age section

Ideally, if Scouting is to have maximum impact on society, it must have a substantial quantity of young people who are members until the final age section and gain the top award in Scouting. These young people are Scouting's "ambassadors" and an example of the impact that Scouting can have on the lives of young people.

Sometimes, however, the final age section simply pays lip service to an educational programme and may not offer much more than a social club. As in the other sections, the top award should:

- be available to all young people in Scouting, even if they have not been in Scouting in all sections;

- build self-confidence and self-esteem;

- help the young person to set and achieve personal objectives;

- facilitate the young person's progress;

- sustain motivation and provide support to overcome difficulties;

- ensure that what is gained is put to use;

- evaluate and publicly recognise progress;

- celebrate achievements.

Some issues related to units and age sections

Peer groups

Young people change and mature very quickly during their formative years. They prefer taking part in activities within a peer group, i.e., others who are of a similar age and stage of development. If the difference in age/maturity is too great, the eldest are likely to find the programme unchallenging or childish and will be more likely to leave before the end of the age section. On the other hand, a few years' difference can be motivating:

the youngest look forward to gaining the abilities of the older members; the older members can recognise their own progression compared to the younger ones and can be given progressively greater responsibility, thus adding to their sense of growing maturity.

Welcoming and integrating new members

Joining a new group can be stressful for young people. This issue exists whether they are new to Scouting or whether they have just moved to a new age section. The way in which they are made to feel welcome and integrated in the unit can make the difference between deciding to stay or to leave.

Offering a glimpse of the next age section

Instead of moving up to the next age section, many young people leave the Movement at the end of the age section they were in. Providing a glimpse of what the next age section offers in terms of new challenges, adventures and opportunities, etc., can motivate more young people to continue to the next age section.

SCOUTING IN **EL SALVADOR** RESPONDED TO THE GANG CULTURE THAT HAD DEVELOPED IN THEIR COUNTRY BY ORGANISING CAMPS FOR GANG MEMBERS TO OFFER THESE YOUNG PEOPLE A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE LIFESTYLE. BY USING THE SCOUT METHOD AND PROVIDING POSITIVE ROLE MODELS IN OLDER SCOUTS, THE YOUNG PEOPLE WERE ENCOURAGED TO FORM 'SOLIDARITY BRIGADES' AND BUILD ON THE POSITIVE VALUES EXPERIENCED IN SCOUTING.

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Sharing ideas

There is often good practice in Scouting in a local area but the ideas are not shared. Good practice may be related directly to activities, but may also be related to ensuring a constructive atmosphere, youth involvement, etc. Managers (such as the district commissioner or Scout group leaders) will also need to have an overview of the activities on offer to the young people to ensure that they are of a suitable nature and quality and that good practice is shared as widely as possible.

The ratio of adult leaders to young people

In any unit, there should be a minimum of two adult leaders present for safety reasons and to deliver the youth programme appropriately. However, if there are too many leaders, they can inhibit the involvement of young people in organising their activities, developing relationships and learning from life in a peer group. The result can be demotivation and therefore an increased dropout rate.

Adult leadership

Adult leadership is an important factor in whether young people choose to join and stay in Scouting.

Developing the abilities of leaders

The skills and abilities of the leadership team are critical to the success of the youth programme. If the leaders do not have the skills to deliver a quality programme that will motivate and challenge the young people in their age section, they will simply lose members. Whether associations recruit leaders who were previously Scouts themselves or from outside the Movement, both require on-going training and support.
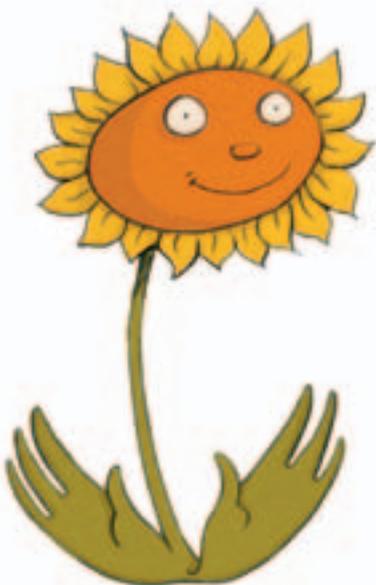
Summary

The youth programme for all age sections has to be appealing, challenging, and relevant to young people, both in theory and in practice. The ability of the leadership team to offer a meaningful experience to young people is crucial.

Active youth involvement (in the unit, in decision-making bodies in the Movement and in the community) helps to create a sense of ownership and a greater capacity for action, while providing essential feedback to ensure that Scouting remains attractive and relevant.

The youth programme needs to be periodically reviewed to ensure that it is attractive and relevant to young people in the societies in which they live.

Offering a top award with clearly thought out objectives for young people to work towards can give the youth programme greater focus and motivate more young people to continue through the final age section.

A number of other factors can influence whether young people join and stay, including the age range within an age section, the attention paid to welcoming and integrating new members, and the appeal and relevance of the subsequent age section.

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